# 棺担ぎのクロ。

## 懐中旅話

~カイチュウタビノワ~

1

「一緒に来るかい？
外の世界へ　それを探しに。」

きゆづきさとこ

Book Design : Kionachi-Graphics www.kionachi.com

MANGA TIME KR COMICS

棺担ぎのクロ。懐中旅話 ~カイチュウタビノワ~ 1 きゆづきさとこ

芳文社

9784832275683
1929979008192
ISBN4-8322-7568-2
C9979 ¥819E
雑誌　52200−68
定価：本体819円+税

黒い旅人と白い子供達の
ちょっとかわった旅のはじまり。

大きな棺を背負った旅人クロとこうもりのセン。ふたりはどこから来て、
どこへ行くのか？　そして背中の棺の意味は…？
新鋭・きゆづきさとこが紡ぎ出す、これぞ新感覚ストーリー4コマ!!

# 棺担（ひつ）（かつ）ぎのクロ。

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～カイチュウタビノワ～

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shoulder a coffin , "kuro"
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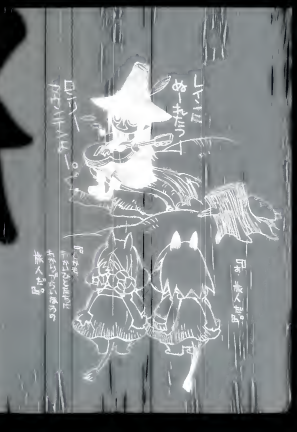
レインに
ぬーれたつ
ロンリー
マウンテンよー。
『あ、旅人だ。』
『かれは
ちかいひとたちに
わかりづらいほうの
旅人だ。』

MANGA TIME
KR
COMICS

# 棺担（ひつぎかつ）ぎのクロ。

## 〜懐中旅話（カイチュウタビノワ）〜

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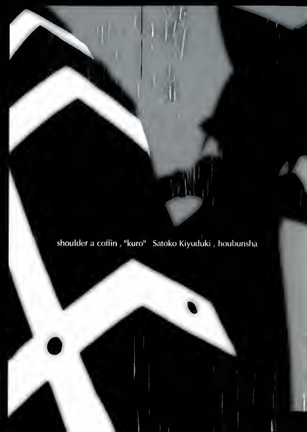
きゆづきさとこ

芳文社



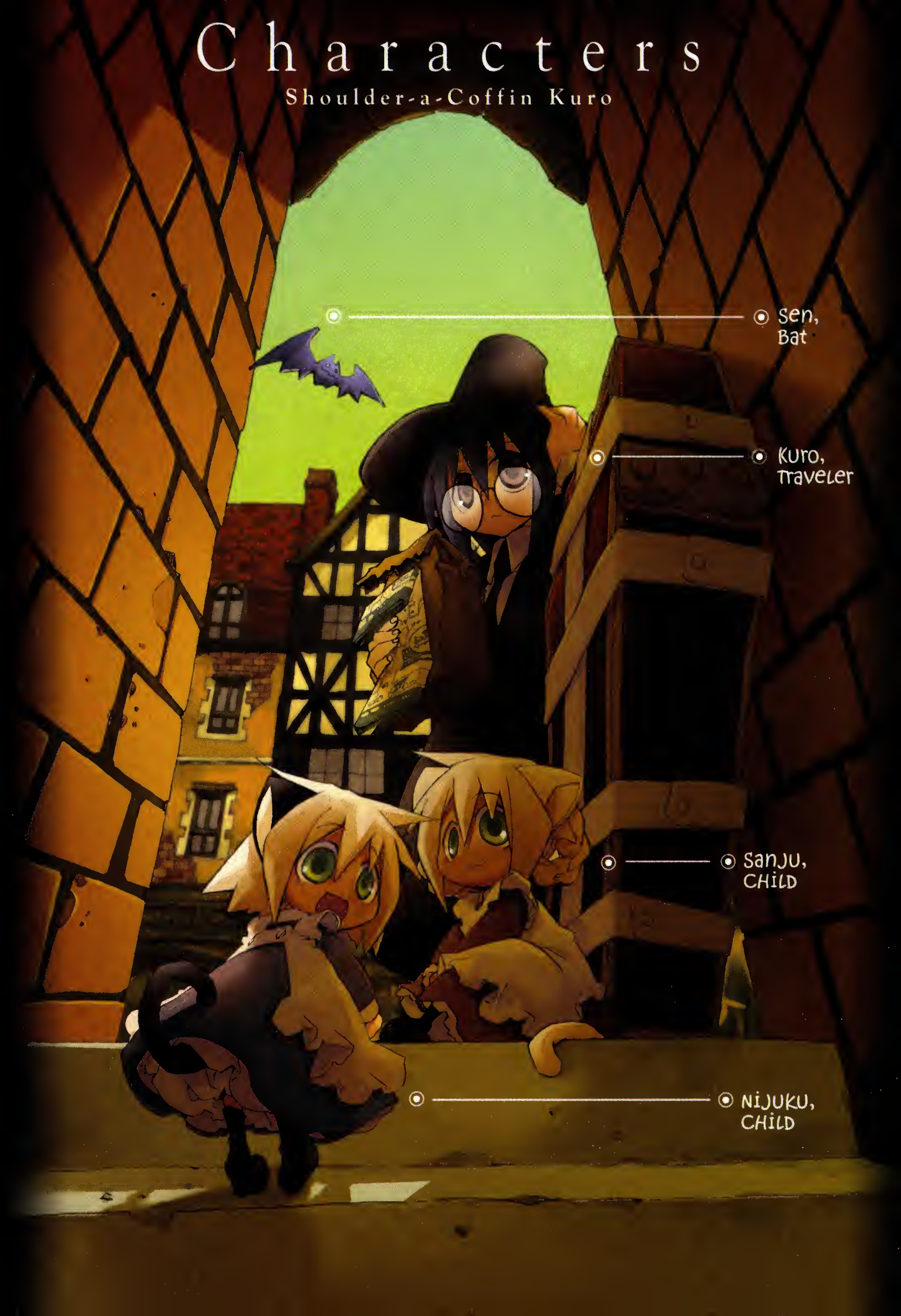
shoulder a coffin , "kuro"   Satoko Kiyuduki , houbunsha

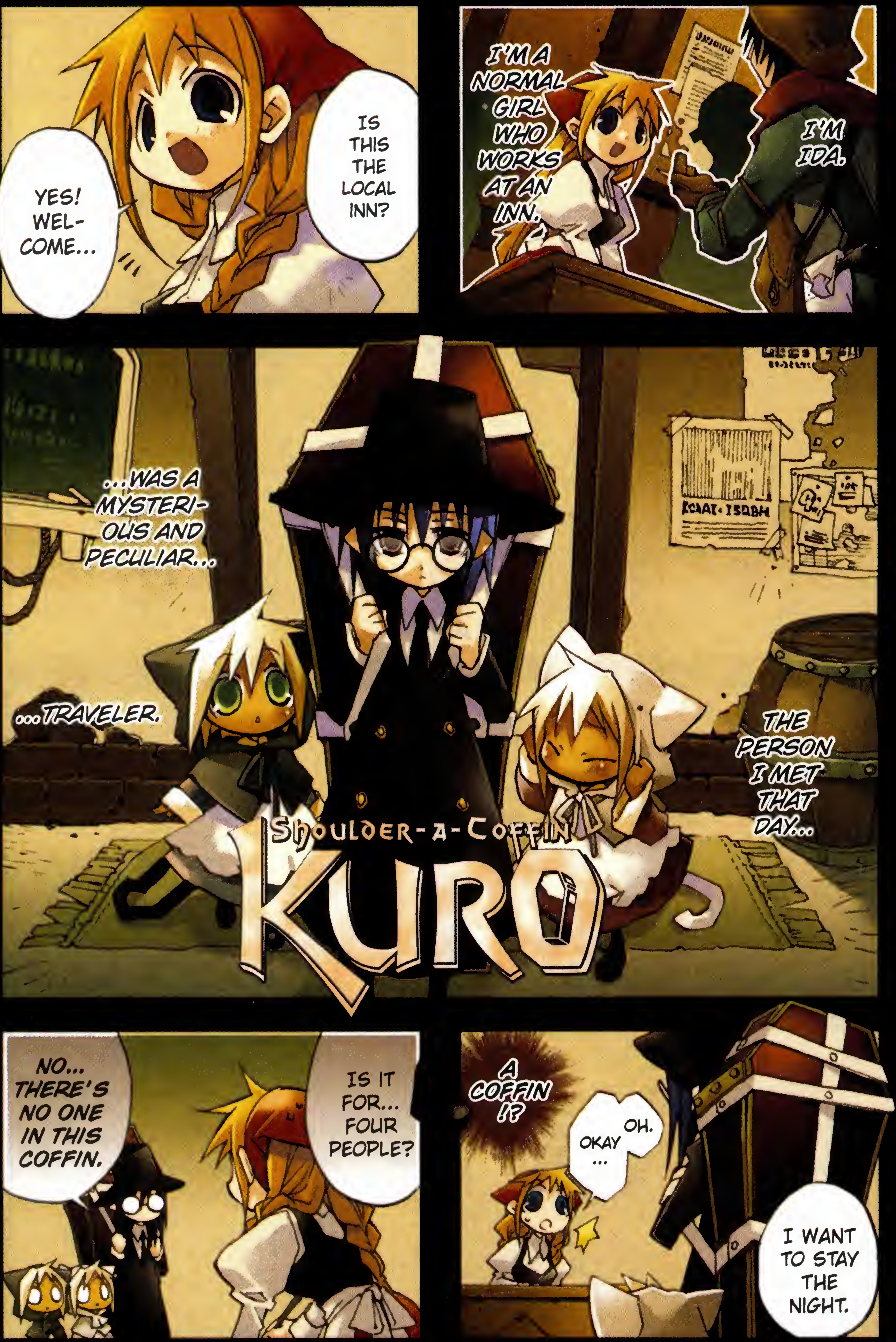
*Yet, the traveler is in the midst of her long, long journey...*

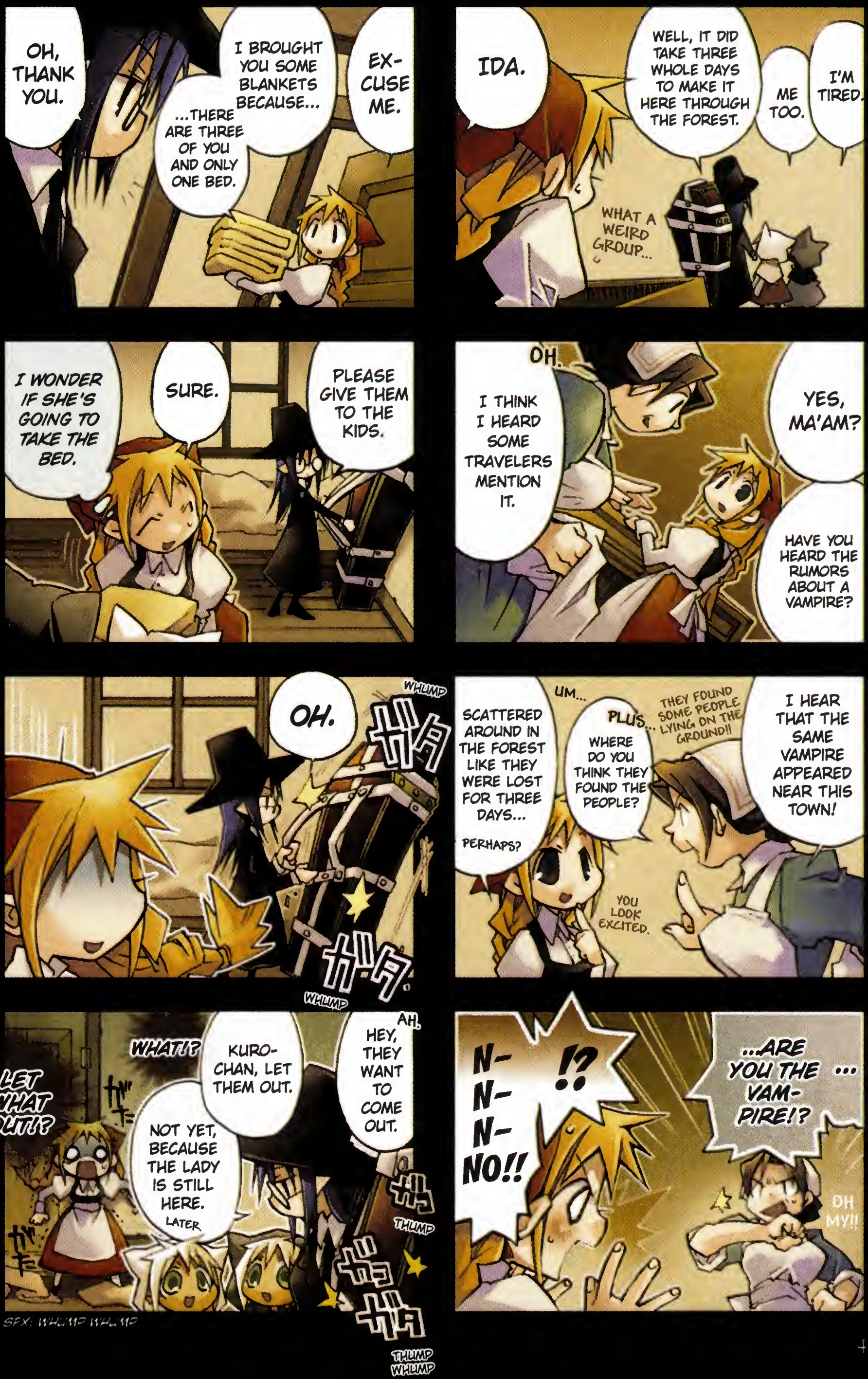
*And this story will be but a small part of that sojourn.*

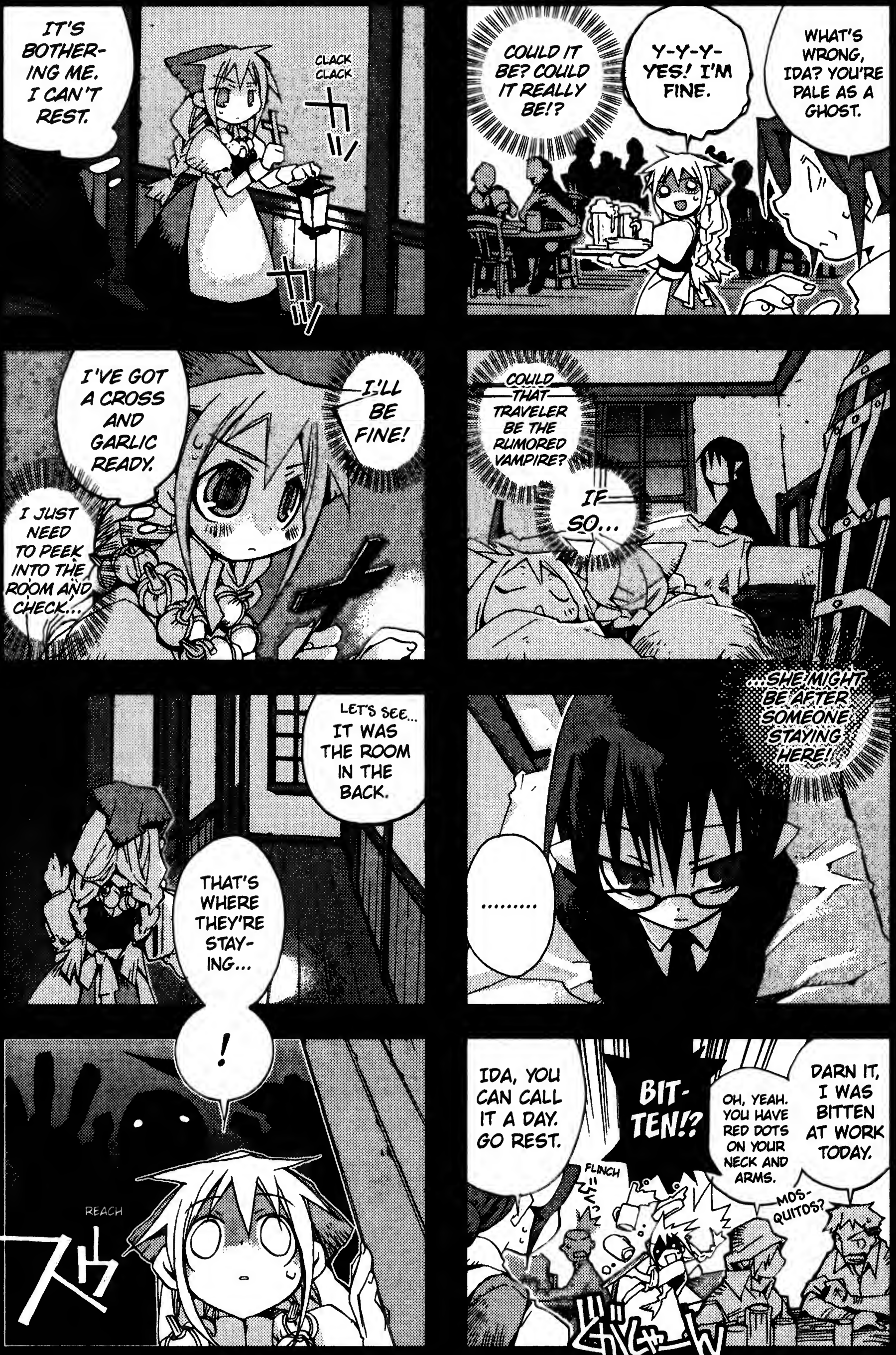
# Characters

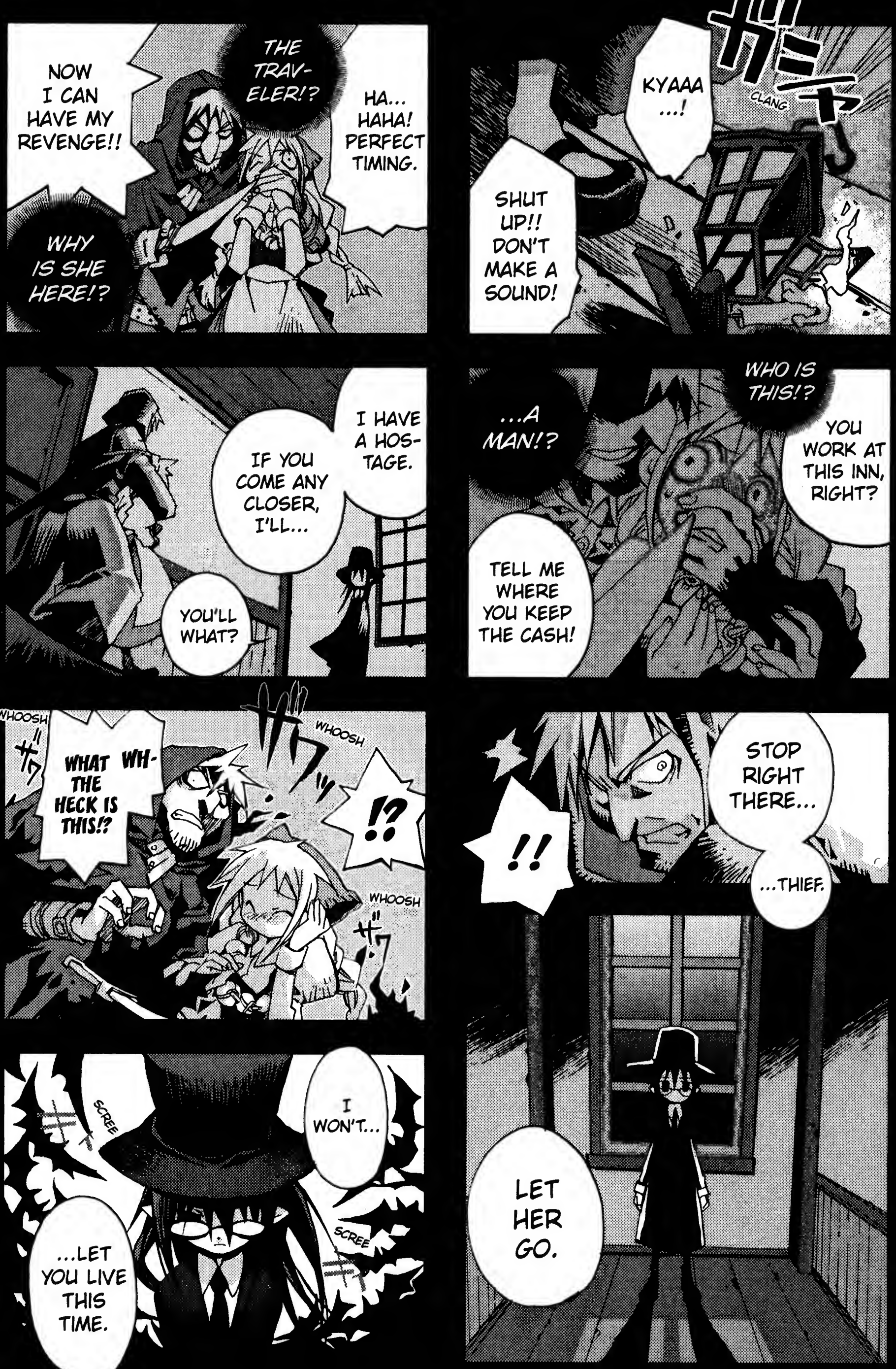
## Shoulder-a-Coffin Kuro

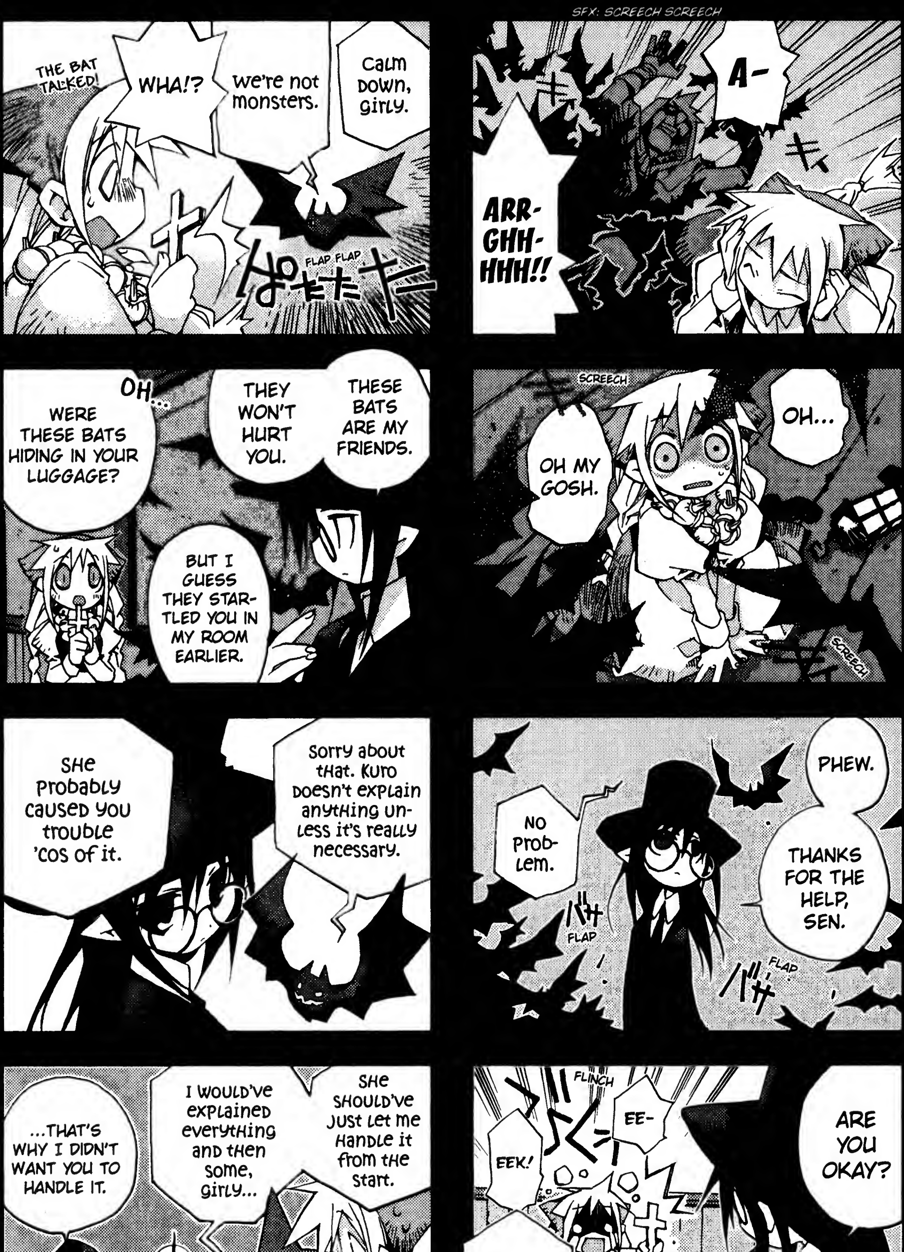

Sen, Bat
Kuro, Traveler
Sanju, Child
Nijuku, Child

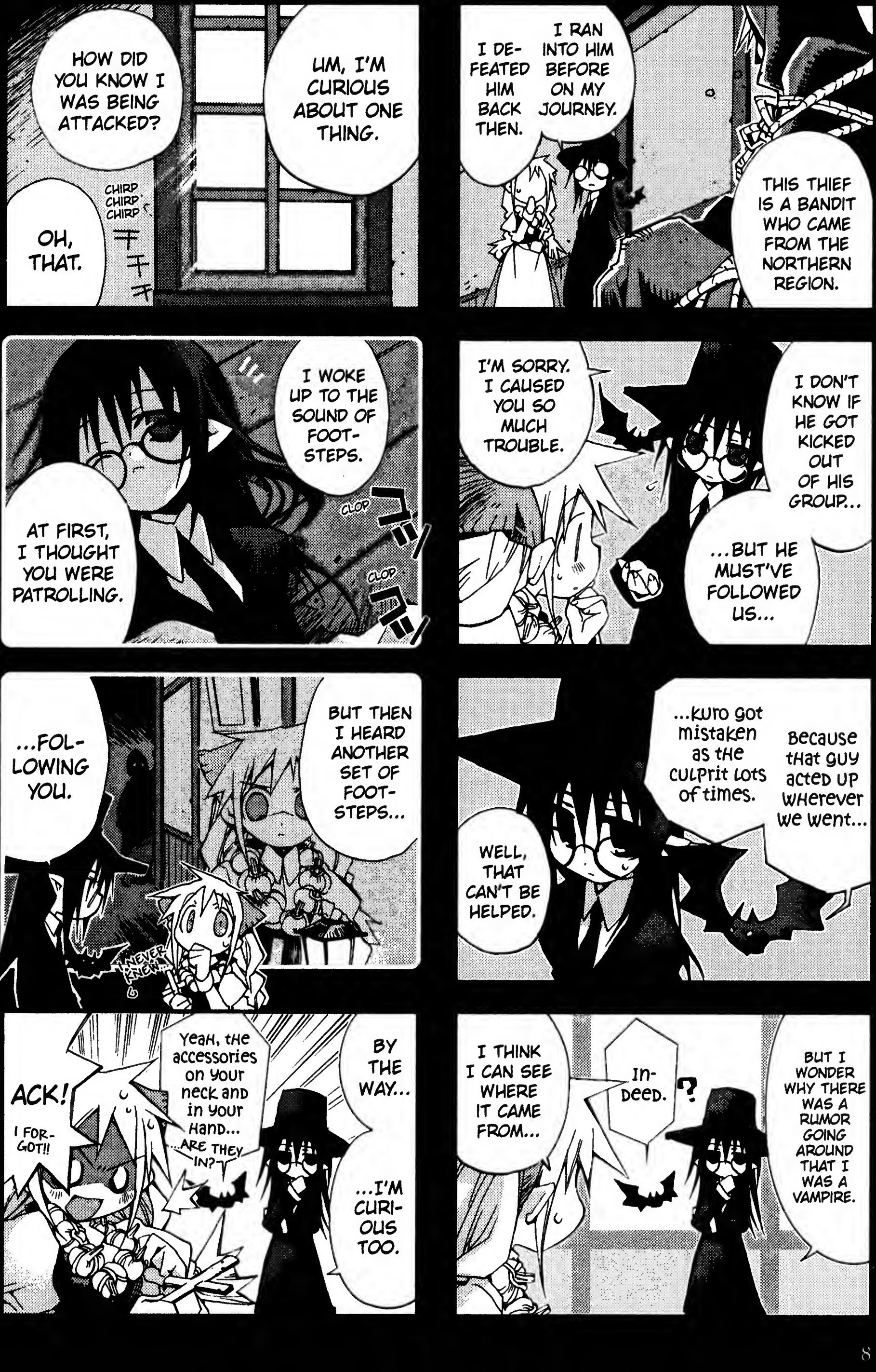

I'M IDA.
I'M A NORMAL GIRL WHO WORKS AT AN INN.
IS THIS THE LOCAL INN?
YES! WELCOME...
THE PERSON I MET THAT DAY...
...WAS A MYSTERIOUS AND PECULIAR...
...TRAVELER.
Shoulder-a-Coffin
KURO
I WANT TO STAY THE NIGHT.
OH.
OKAY...
A COFFIN!?
IS IT FOR... FOUR PEOPLE?
NO... THERE'S NO ONE IN THIS COFFIN.

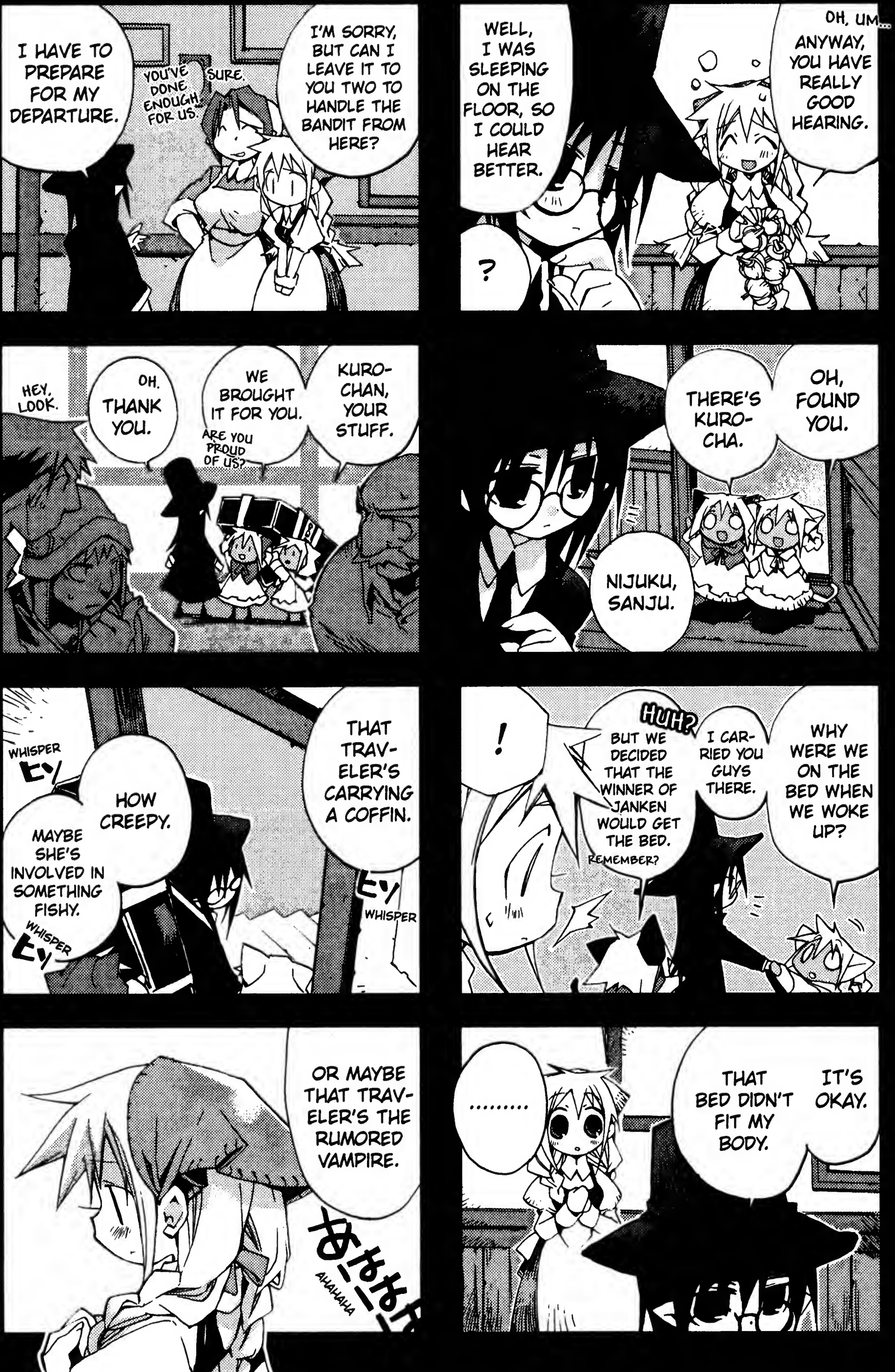

I'M TIRED.
ME TOO.
WELL, IT DID TAKE THREE WHOLE DAYS TO MAKE IT HERE THROUGH THE FOREST.
IDA.
WHAT A WEIRD GROUP...
EXCUSE ME.
I BROUGHT YOU SOME BLANKETS BECAUSE...
...THERE ARE THREE OF YOU AND ONLY ONE BED.
OH, THANK YOU.
YES, MA'AM?
HAVE YOU HEARD THE RUMORS ABOUT A VAMPIRE?
OH.
I THINK I HEARD SOME TRAVELERS MENTION IT.
PLEASE GIVE THEM TO THE KIDS.
SURE.
I WONDER IF SHE'S GOING TO TAKE THE BED.
I HEAR THAT THE SAME VAMPIRE APPEARED NEAR THIS TOWN!
THEY FOUND SOME PEOPLE LYING ON THE GROUND!!
PLUS...
WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY FOUND THE PEOPLE?
UM...
SCATTERED AROUND IN THE FOREST LIKE THEY WERE LOST FOR THREE DAYS... PERHAPS?
YOU LOOK EXCITED.
WHUMP
ガタ
ガタ
WHUMP
OH.
...ARE YOU THE VAMPIRE!? ...
OH MY!!
!?
N-N-N-NO!!
AH.
HEY, THEY WANT TO COME OUT.
KURO-CHAN, LET THEM OUT.
NOT YET, BECAUSE THE LADY IS STILL HERE. LATER.
WHAT!?
LET WHAT OUT!?
ガッ
THUMP
ガッ
ガタ
THUMP WHUMP
ガタ
ガタ
SFX: WHUMP WHUMP

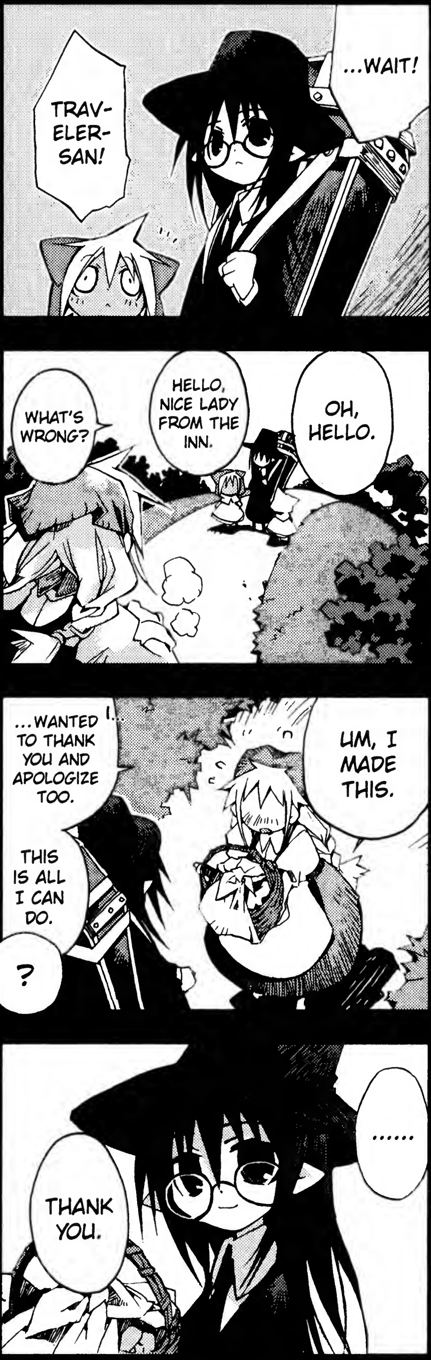

WHAT'S WRONG, IDA? YOU'RE PALE AS A GHOST.
Y-Y-Y-YES! I'M FINE.
COULD IT BE? COULD IT REALLY BE!?
COULD THAT TRAVELER BE THE RUMORED VAMPIRE?
IF SO...
...SHE MIGHT BE AFTER SOMEONE STAYING HERE!
.........
DARN IT, I WAS BITTEN AT WORK TODAY.
OH, YEAH. YOU HAVE RED DOTS ON YOUR NECK AND ARMS.
MOS-QUITOS?
BIT-TEN!?
IDA, YOU CAN CALL IT A DAY. GO REST.
FLINCH
CRAAASH
IT'S BOTHER-ING ME. I CAN'T REST.
CLACK CLACK
I'VE GOT A CROSS AND GARLIC READY.
I'LL BE FINE!
I JUST NEED TO PEEK INTO THE ROOM AND CHECK...
LET'S SEE... IT WAS THE ROOM IN THE BACK.
THAT'S WHERE THEY'RE STAY-ING...
!
REACH

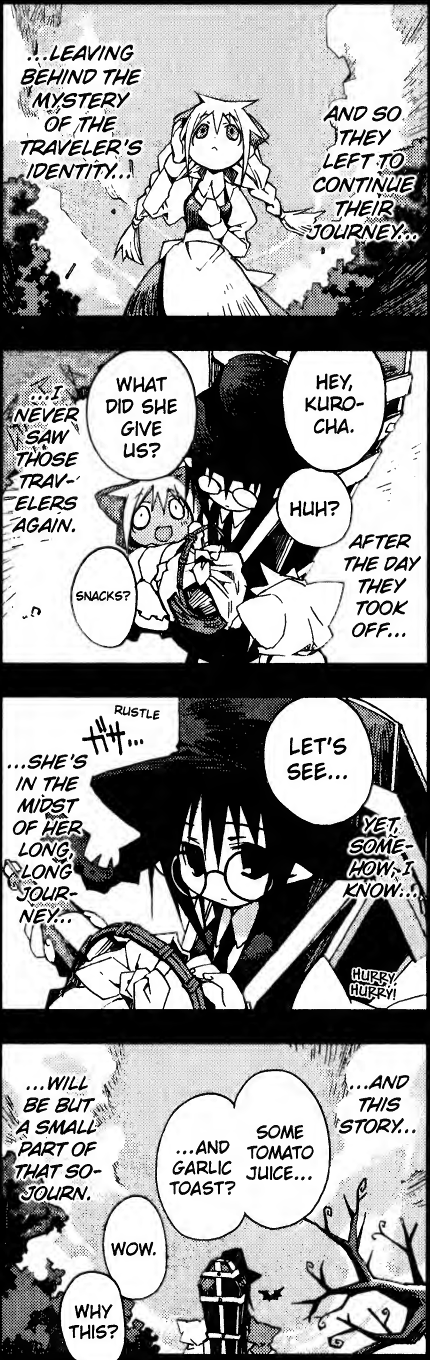

KYAAA ...!
CLANG
SHUT UP!! DON'T MAKE A SOUND!
HA... HAHA! PERFECT TIMING.
THE TRAVELER!?
NOW I CAN HAVE MY REVENGE!!
WHY IS SHE HERE!?
WHO IS THIS!?
YOU WORK AT THIS INN, RIGHT?
...A MAN!?
TELL ME WHERE YOU KEEP THE CASH!
I HAVE A HOSTAGE.
IF YOU COME ANY CLOSER, I'LL...
YOU'LL WHAT?
STOP RIGHT THERE...
...THIEF.
!!
WHOOSH
!?
WHOOSH
WH-
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS!?
WHOOSH
LET HER GO.
I WON'T...
SCREE
SCREE
...LET YOU LIVE THIS TIME.


SFX: SCREECH SCREECH
A-
ARRGHHHH!!
Calm down, girly.
we're not monsters.
WHA!?
THE BAT TALKED!
FLAP FLAP
OH...
OH MY GOSH.
SCREECH
SCREECH
THESE BATS ARE MY FRIENDS.
THEY WON'T HURT YOU.
BUT I GUESS THEY STARTLED YOU IN MY ROOM EARLIER.
OH...
WERE THESE BATS HIDING IN YOUR LUGGAGE?
PHEW.
THANKS FOR THE HELP, SEN.
No problem.
FLAP
FLAP
Sorry about that. Kuro doesn't explain anything unless it's really necessary.
She probably caused you trouble 'cos of it.
ARE YOU OKAY?
FLINCH
EE-
EEK!
I think she's more terrified than before, Kuro.
She should've just let me handle it from the start.
I would've explained everything and then some, girly...
...THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO HANDLE IT.

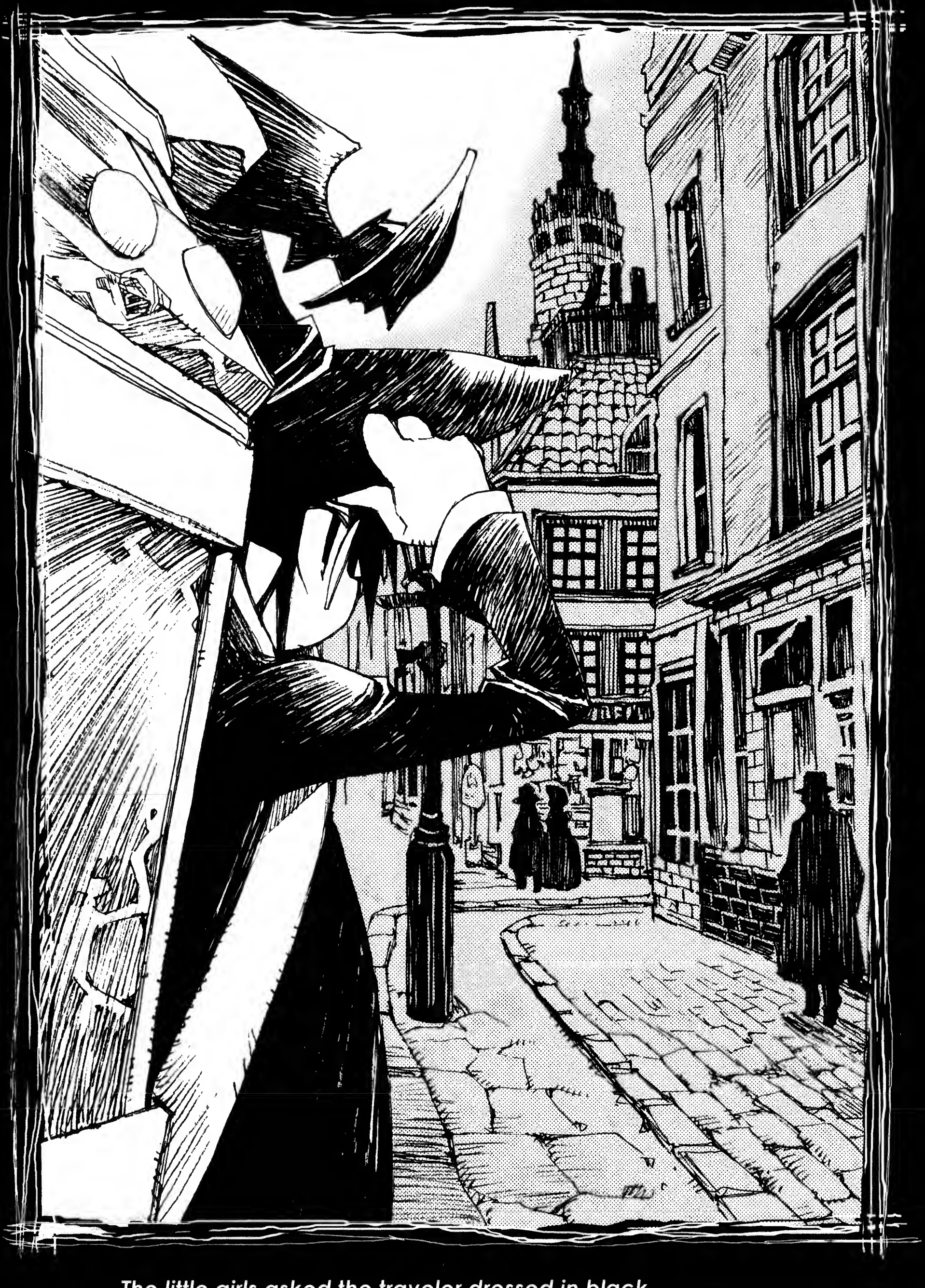

THIS THIEF IS A BANDIT WHO CAME FROM THE NORTHERN REGION.
I RAN INTO HIM BEFORE ON MY JOURNEY.
I DEFEATED HIM BACK THEN.
UM, I'M CURIOUS ABOUT ONE THING.
HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS BEING ATTACKED?
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP
チ チ チ
OH, THAT.
I DON'T KNOW IF HE GOT KICKED OUT OF HIS GROUP...
...BUT HE MUST'VE FOLLOWED US...
I'M SORRY. I CAUSED YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE.
I WOKE UP TO THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS.
CLOP
CLOP
AT FIRST, I THOUGHT YOU WERE PATROLLING.
Because that guy acted up wherever we went...
...kuro got mistaken as the culprit lots of times.
WELL, THAT CAN'T BE HELPED.
BUT THEN I HEARD ANOTHER SET OF FOOTSTEPS...
...FOLLOWING YOU.
NEVER KNEW...
BUT I WONDER WHY THERE WAS A RUMOR GOING AROUND THAT I WAS A VAMPIRE.
?
Indeed.
I THINK I CAN SEE WHERE IT CAME FROM...
BY THE WAY...
...I'M CURIOUS TOO.
Yeah, the accessories on your neck and in your hand...
...ARE THEY IN?
ACK!
I FORGOT!!


OH, UM...
ANYWAY, YOU HAVE REALLY GOOD HEARING.
WELL, I WAS SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR, SO I COULD HEAR BETTER.
?
OH, FOUND YOU.
THERE'S KURO-CHA.
NIJUKU, SANJU.
WHY WERE WE ON THE BED WHEN WE WOKE UP?
I CARRIED YOU GUYS THERE.
HUH?
BUT WE DECIDED THAT THE WINNER OF JANKEN WOULD GET THE BED.
REMEMBER?
!
IT'S OKAY.
THAT BED DIDN'T FIT MY BODY.
.........
I'M SORRY, BUT CAN I LEAVE IT TO YOU TWO TO HANDLE THE BANDIT FROM HERE?
SURE.
YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH FOR US.
I HAVE TO PREPARE FOR MY DEPARTURE.
KURO-CHAN, YOUR STUFF.
WE BROUGHT IT FOR YOU.
ARE YOU PROUD OF US?
OH. THANK YOU.
HEY, LOOK.
THAT TRAVELER'S CARRYING A COFFIN.
ヒソ WHISPER
HOW CREEPY.
ヒソ WHISPER
MAYBE SHE'S INVOLVED IN SOMETHING FISHY.
ヒソ WHISPER
OR MAYBE THAT TRAVELER'S THE RUMORED VAMPIRE.
あははー AHAHAHA


...WAIT!
TRAVELER-SAN!
OH, HELLO.
HELLO, NICE LADY FROM THE INN.
WHAT'S WRONG?
UM, I MADE THIS.
...WANTED TO THANK YOU AND APOLOGIZE TOO.
THIS IS ALL I CAN DO.
?
......
THANK YOU.

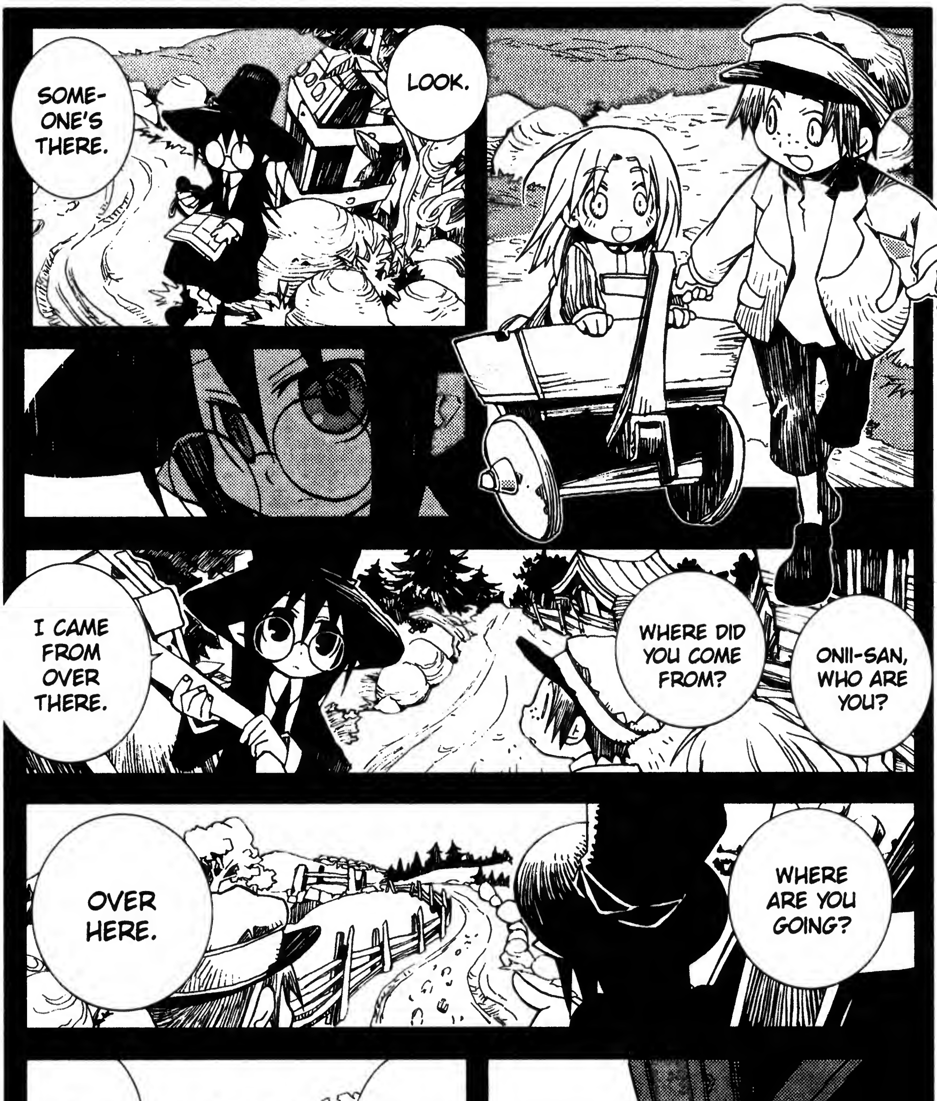

AND SO THEY LEFT TO CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY...
...LEAVING BEHIND THE MYSTERY OF THE TRAVELER'S IDENTITY...
HEY, KURO-CHA.
WHAT DID SHE GIVE US?
HUH?
SNACKS?
AFTER THE DAY THEY TOOK OFF...
...I NEVER SAW THOSE TRAVELERS AGAIN.
LET'S SEE...
YET, SOMEHOW, I KNOW...
RUSTLE
ガサ...
...SHE'S IN THE MIDST OF HER LONG, LONG JOURNEY...
HURRY, HURRY!
...AND THIS STORY...
SOME TOMATO JUICE...
...AND GARLIC TOAST?
WOW.
WHY THIS?
...WILL BE BUT A SMALL PART OF THAT SOJOURN.

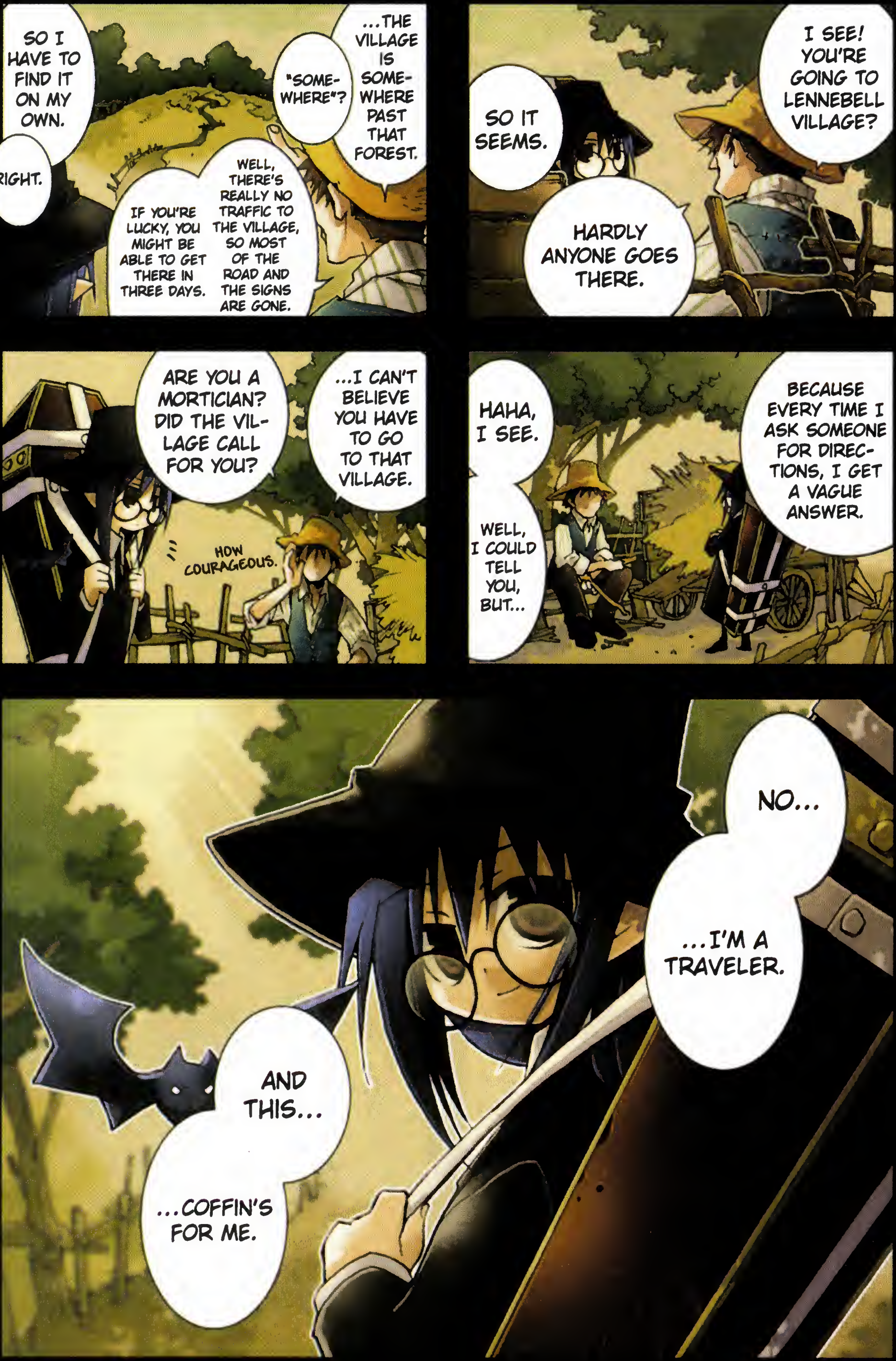
Shoulder-a-Coffin Kuro by Satoko Kiyuduki

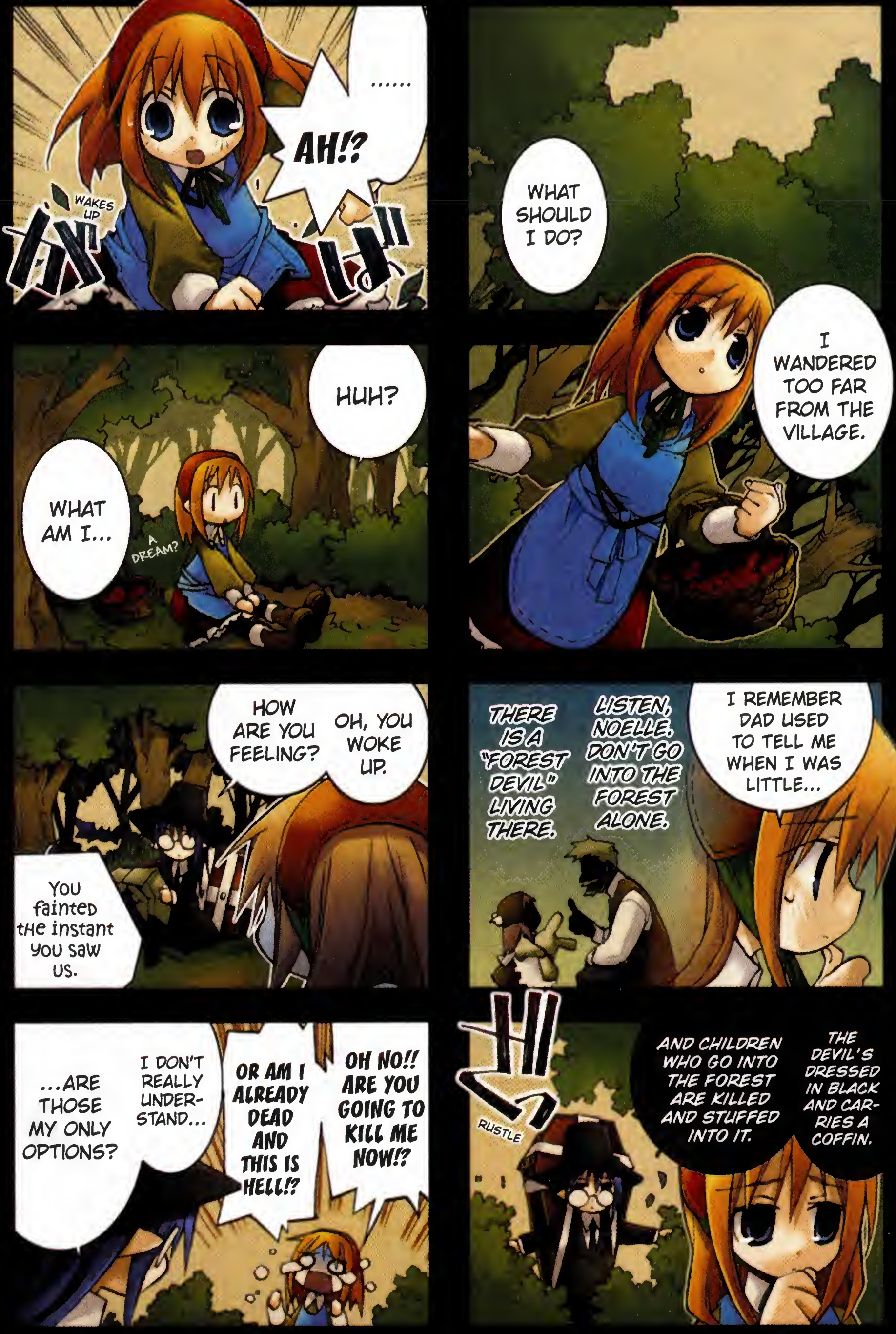


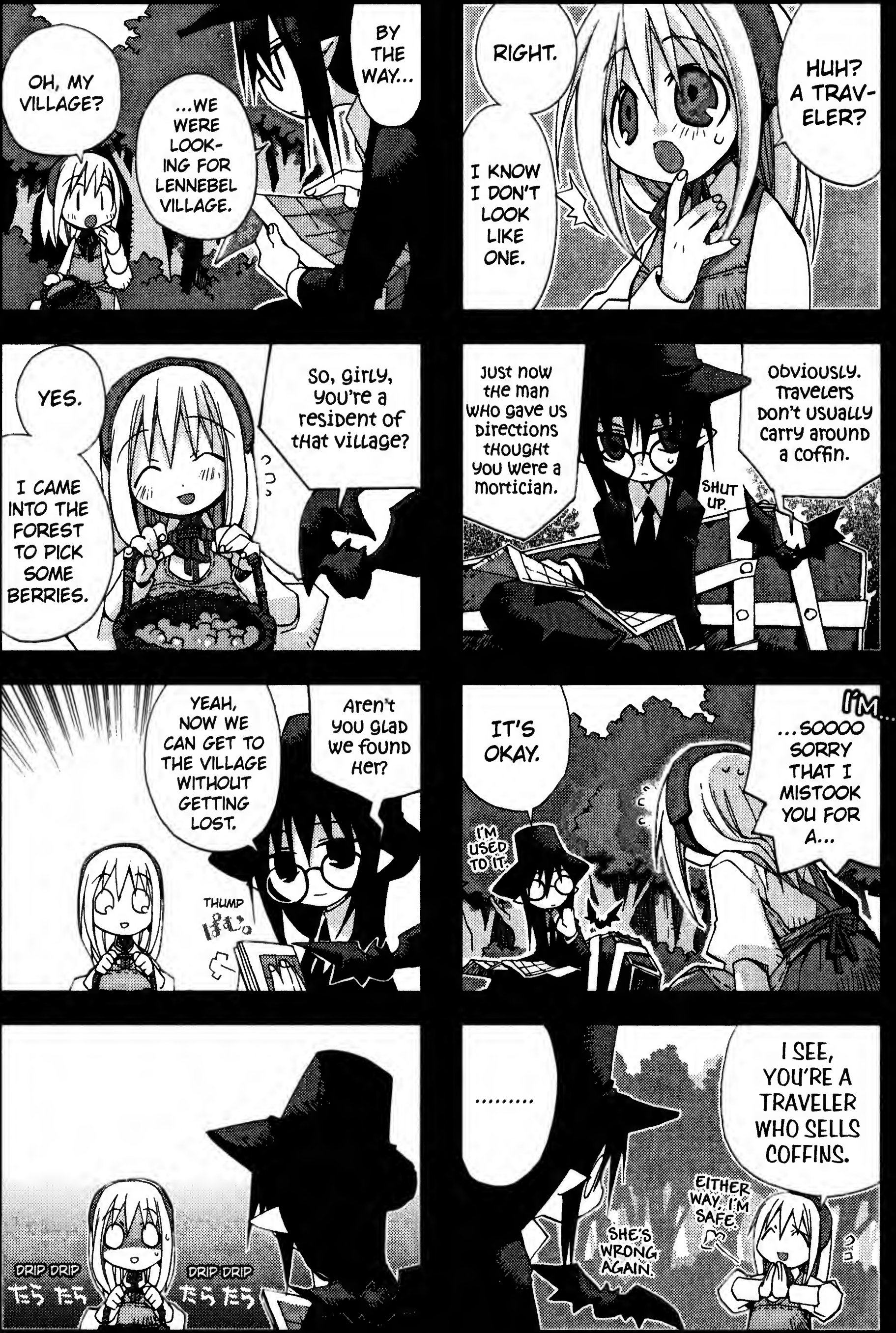
*The little girls asked the traveler dressed in black,*

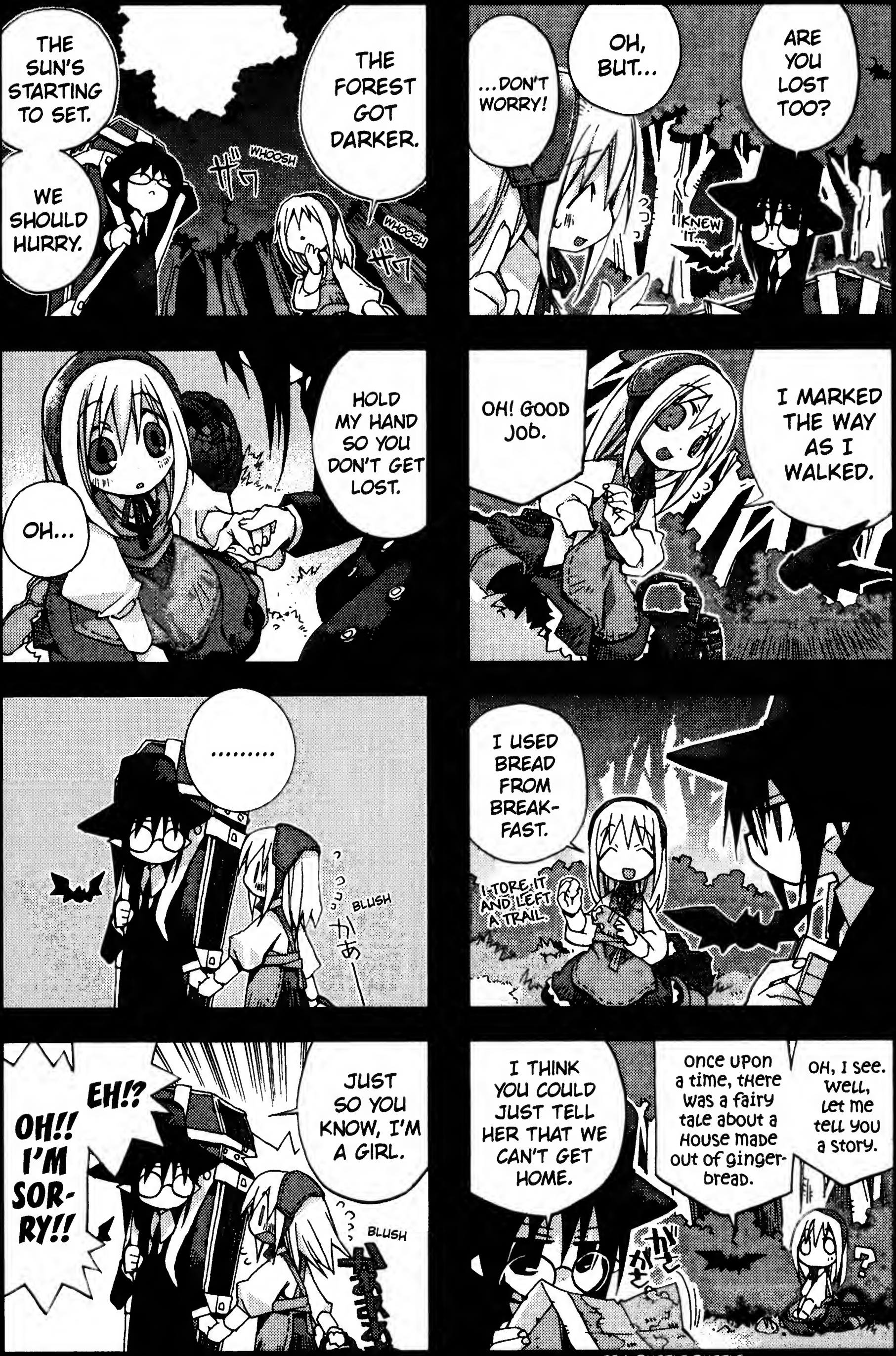
*"You're all dressed in black, Traveler-san. Who are you?"*


LOOK.
SOMEONE'S THERE.
ONII-SAN, WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
I CAME FROM OVER THERE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OVER HERE.
I WONDER WHAT HE DOES?
NOT SURE...

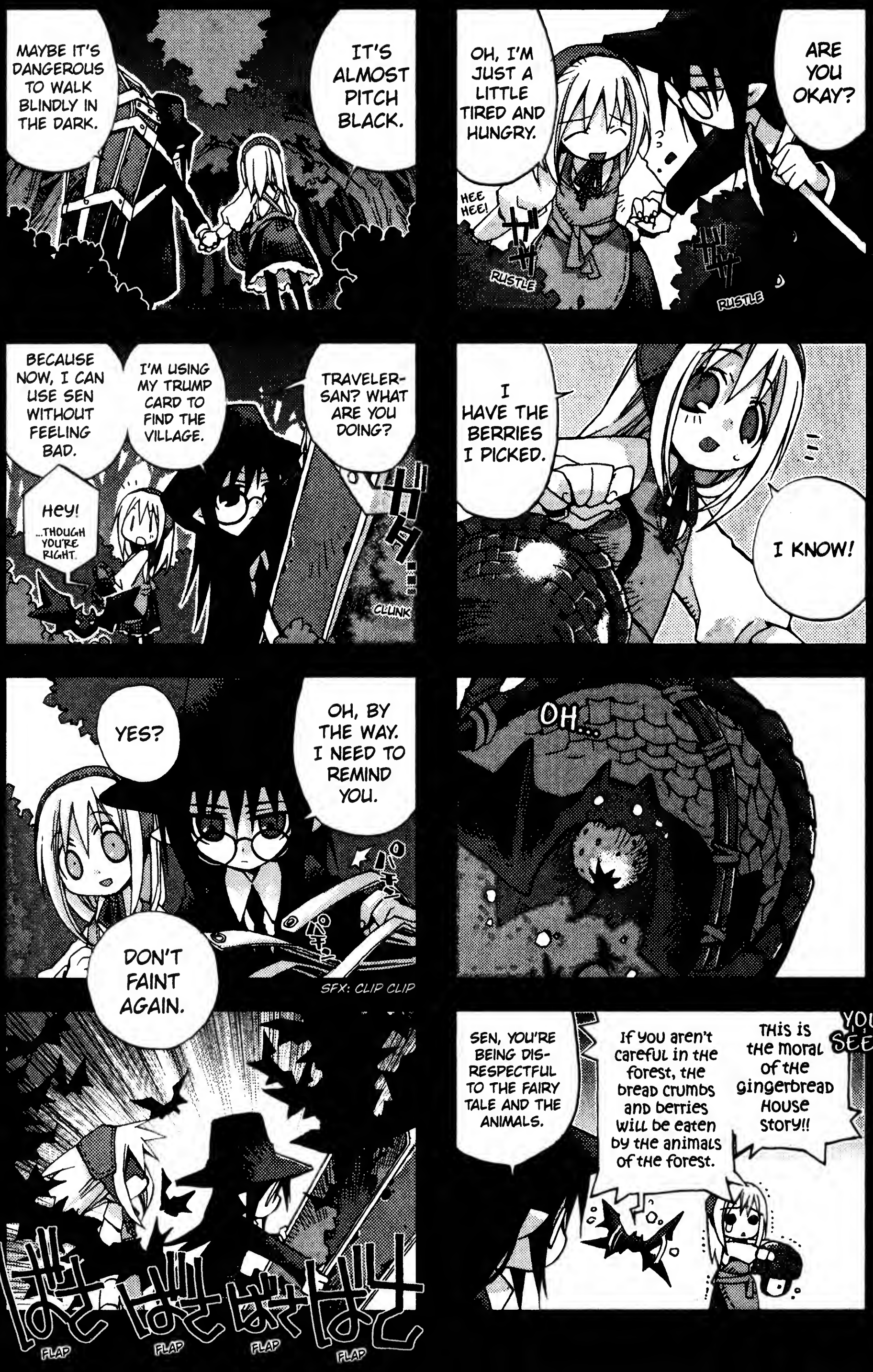

I SEE! YOU'RE GOING TO LENNEBELL VILLAGE?
SO IT SEEMS.
HARDLY ANYONE GOES THERE.
BECAUSE EVERY TIME I ASK SOMEONE FOR DIRECTIONS, I GET A VAGUE ANSWER.
HAHA, I SEE.
WELL, I COULD TELL YOU, BUT...
...THE VILLAGE IS SOMEWHERE PAST THAT FOREST.
"SOMEWHERE"?
WELL, THERE'S REALLY NO TRAFFIC TO THE VILLAGE, SO MOST OF THE ROAD AND THE SIGNS ARE GONE.
IF YOU'RE LUCKY, YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THERE IN THREE DAYS.
SO I HAVE TO FIND IT ON MY OWN.
RIGHT.
...I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE TO GO TO THAT VILLAGE.
ARE YOU A MORTICIAN? DID THE VILLAGE CALL FOR YOU?
HOW COURAGEOUS.
NO...
...I'M A TRAVELER.
AND THIS...
...COFFIN'S FOR ME.

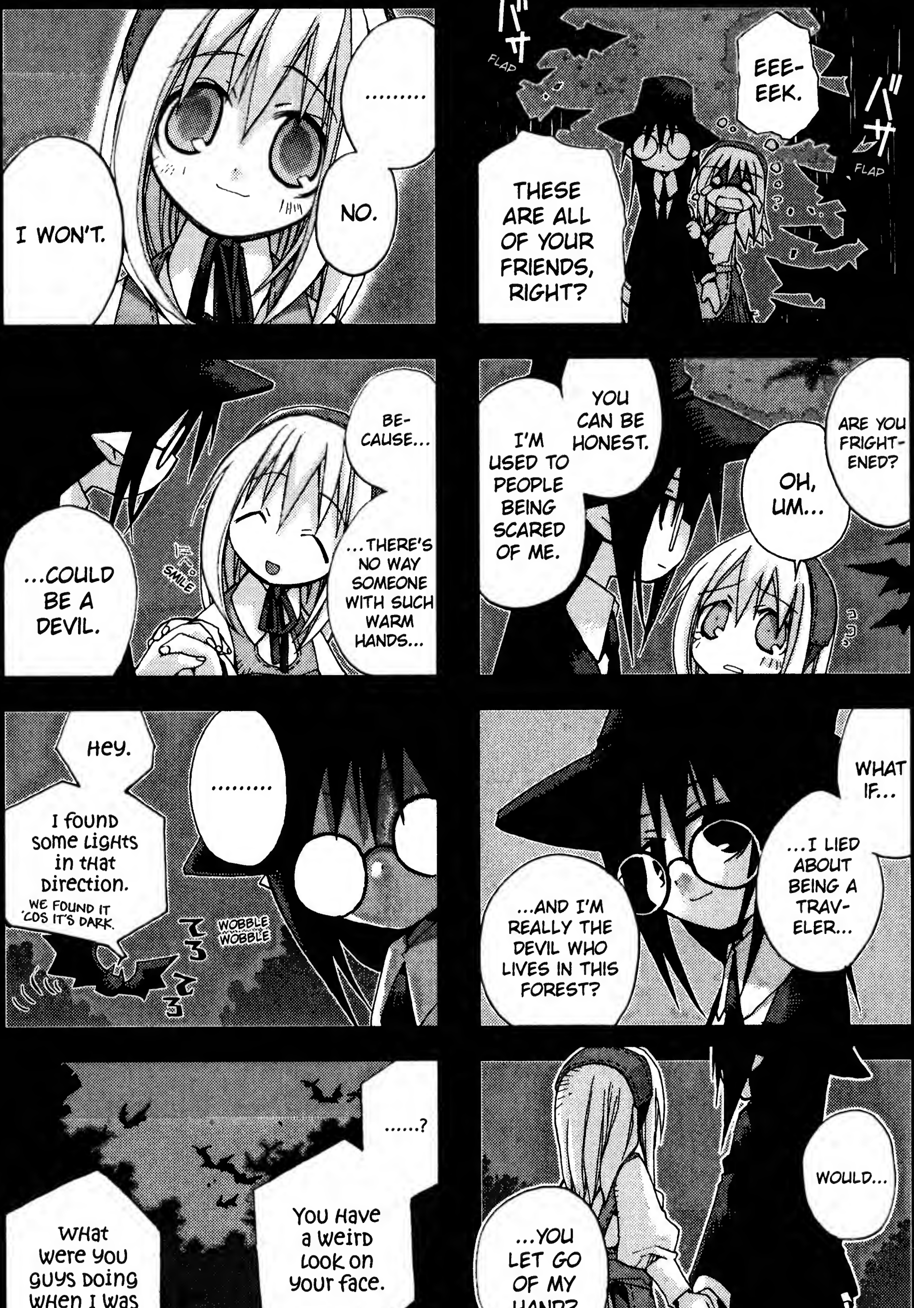

……
AH!?
WAKES UP
HUH?
WHAT AM I…
A DREAM?
I WANDERED TOO FAR FROM THE VILLAGE.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I REMEMBER DAD USED TO TELL ME WHEN I WAS LITTLE…
LISTEN, NOELLE. DON'T GO INTO THE FOREST ALONE.
THERE IS A "FOREST DEVIL" LIVING THERE.
THE DEVIL'S DRESSED IN BLACK AND CARRIES A COFFIN.
AND CHILDREN WHO GO INTO THE FOREST ARE KILLED AND STUFFED INTO IT.
RUSTLE
OH, YOU WOKE UP.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
You fainted the instant you saw us.
OH NO!! ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME NOW!?
OR AM I ALREADY DEAD AND THIS IS HELL!?
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND…
…ARE THOSE MY ONLY OPTIONS?

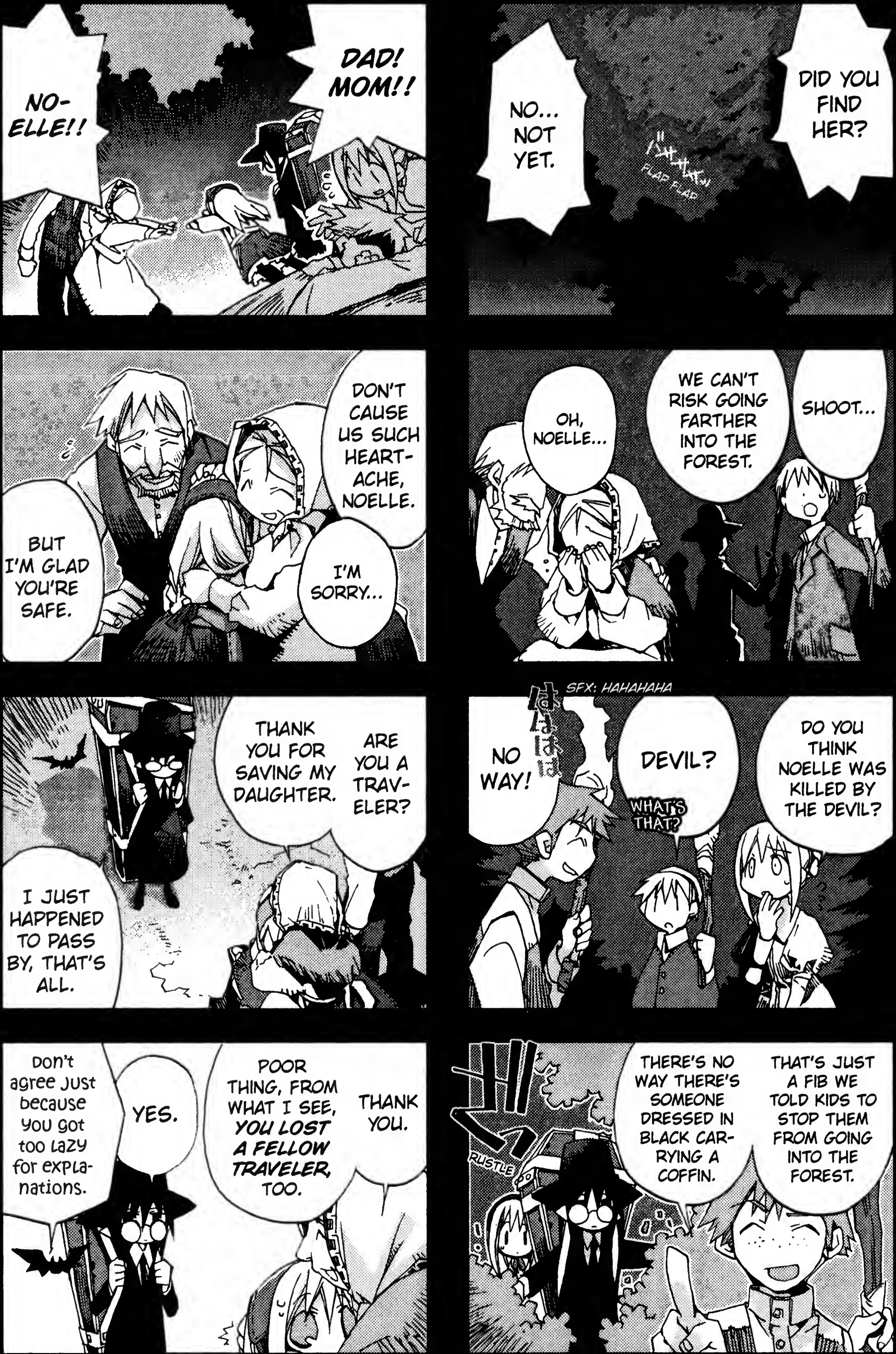

HUH? A TRAVELER?
RIGHT.
I KNOW I DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE.
Obviously. Travelers don't usually carry around a coffin.
SHUT UP.
Just now the man who gave us directions thought you were a mortician.
I'M...
...SOOOO SORRY THAT I MISTOOK YOU FOR A...
IT'S OKAY.
I'M USED TO IT.
I SEE, YOU'RE A TRAVELER WHO SELLS COFFINS.
EITHER WAY, I'M SAFE.
SHE'S WRONG AGAIN.
.........
BY THE WAY...
...WE WERE LOOKING FOR LENNEBEL VILLAGE.
OH, MY VILLAGE?
So, girly, you're a resident of that village?
YES.
I CAME INTO THE FOREST TO PICK SOME BERRIES.
Aren't you glad we found her?
YEAH, NOW WE CAN GET TO THE VILLAGE WITHOUT GETTING LOST.
THUMP ぱむ。
DRIP DRIP たら たら
DRIP DRIP たら たら

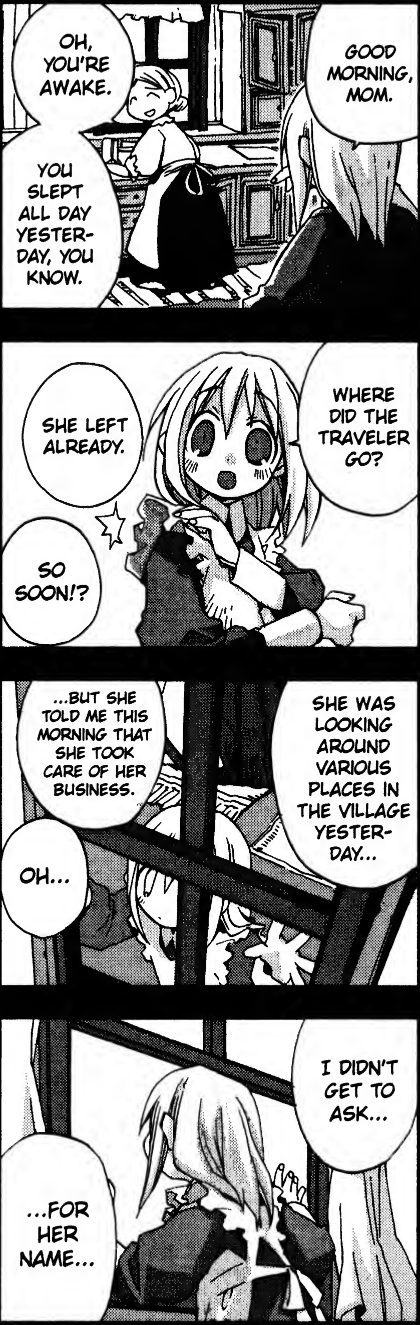

ARE YOU LOST TOO?
OH, BUT...
...DON'T WORRY!
I KNEW IT...
I MARKED THE WAY AS I WALKED.
OH! GOOD JOB.
I USED BREAD FROM BREAKFAST.
I TORE IT AND LEFT A TRAIL.
OH, I SEE. WELL, LET ME TELL YOU A STORY.
ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A FAIRY TALE ABOUT A HOUSE MADE OUT OF GINGERBREAD.
I THINK YOU COULD JUST TELL HER THAT WE CAN'T GET HOME.
?
THE FOREST GOT DARKER.
THE SUN'S STARTING TO SET.
WE SHOULD HURRY.
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
HOLD MY HAND SO YOU DON'T GET LOST.
OH...
.........
BLUSH
JUST SO YOU KNOW, I'M A GIRL.
EH!?
OH!! I'M SORRY!!
BLUSH

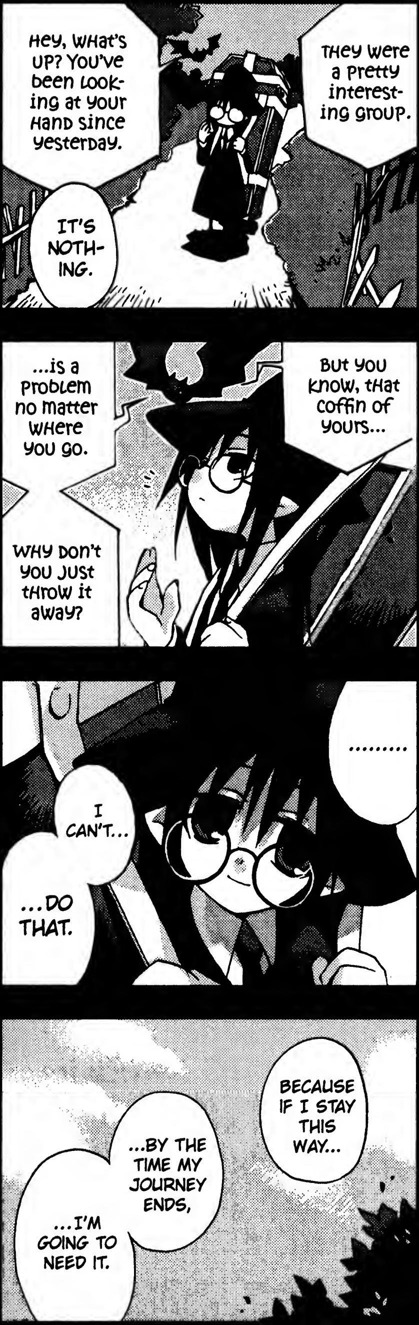
SFX: RUSTLE RUSTLE

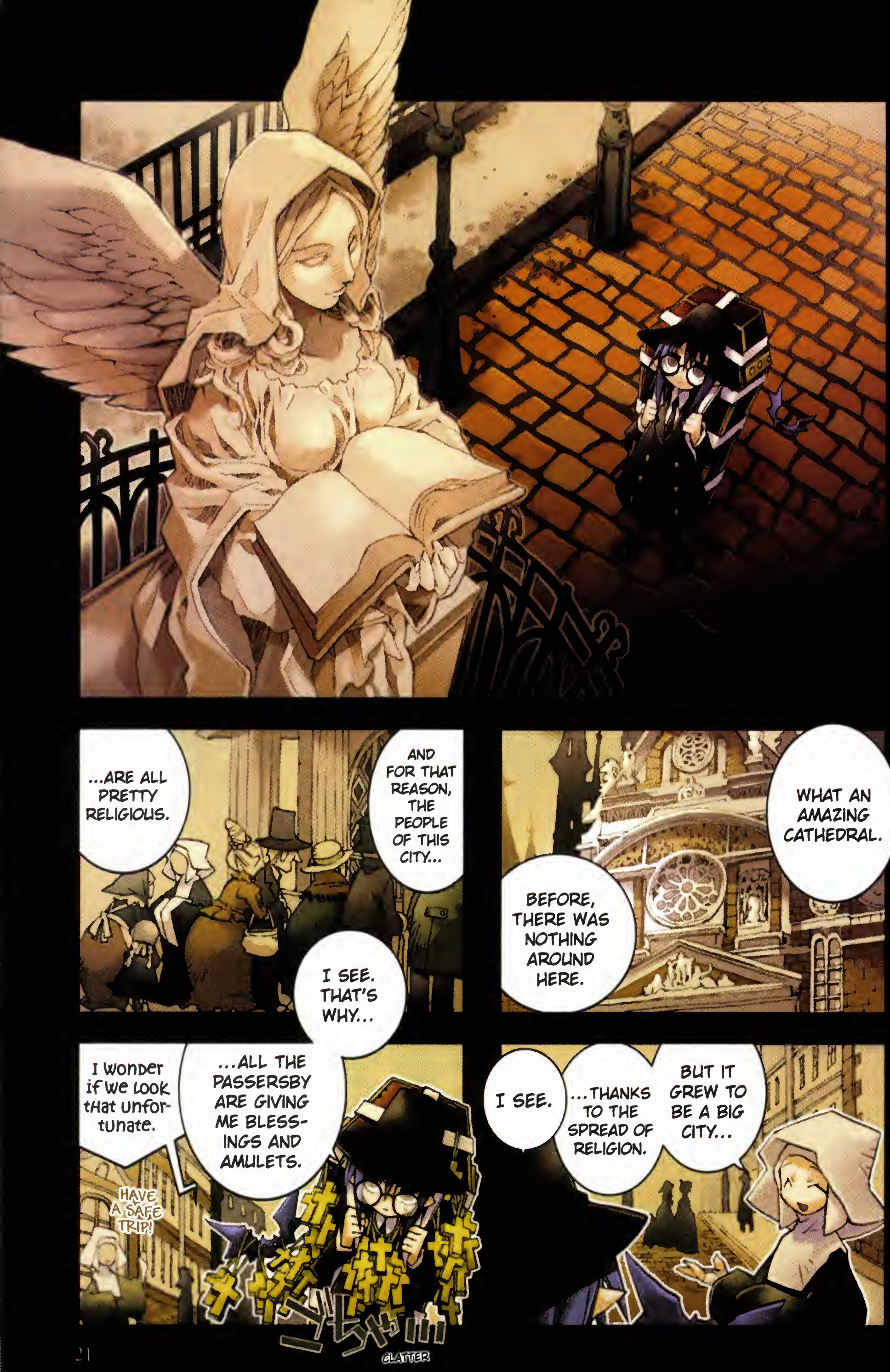

ARE YOU OKAY?
OH, I'M JUST A LITTLE TIRED AND HUNGRY.
HEE HEE!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I KNOW!
I HAVE THE BERRIES I PICKED.
OH...
YOU SEE...
THIS is THE moral of THE gingerbread HOUSE story!!
If YOU aren't careful in THE forest, THE bread crumbs and berries will be eaten by THE animals of THE forest.
SEN, YOU'RE BEING DIS-RESPECTFUL TO THE FAIRY TALE AND THE ANIMALS.
IT'S ALMOST PITCH BLACK.
MAYBE IT'S DANGEROUS TO WALK BLINDLY IN THE DARK.
TRAVELER-SAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M USING MY TRUMP CARD TO FIND THE VILLAGE.
BECAUSE NOW, I CAN USE SEN WITHOUT FEELING BAD.
HEY! ...THOUGH YOU'RE RIGHT.
CLUNK
OH, BY THE WAY. I NEED TO REMIND YOU.
YES?
DON'T FAINT AGAIN.
SFX: CLIP CLIP
ばさばさばさばさ
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP

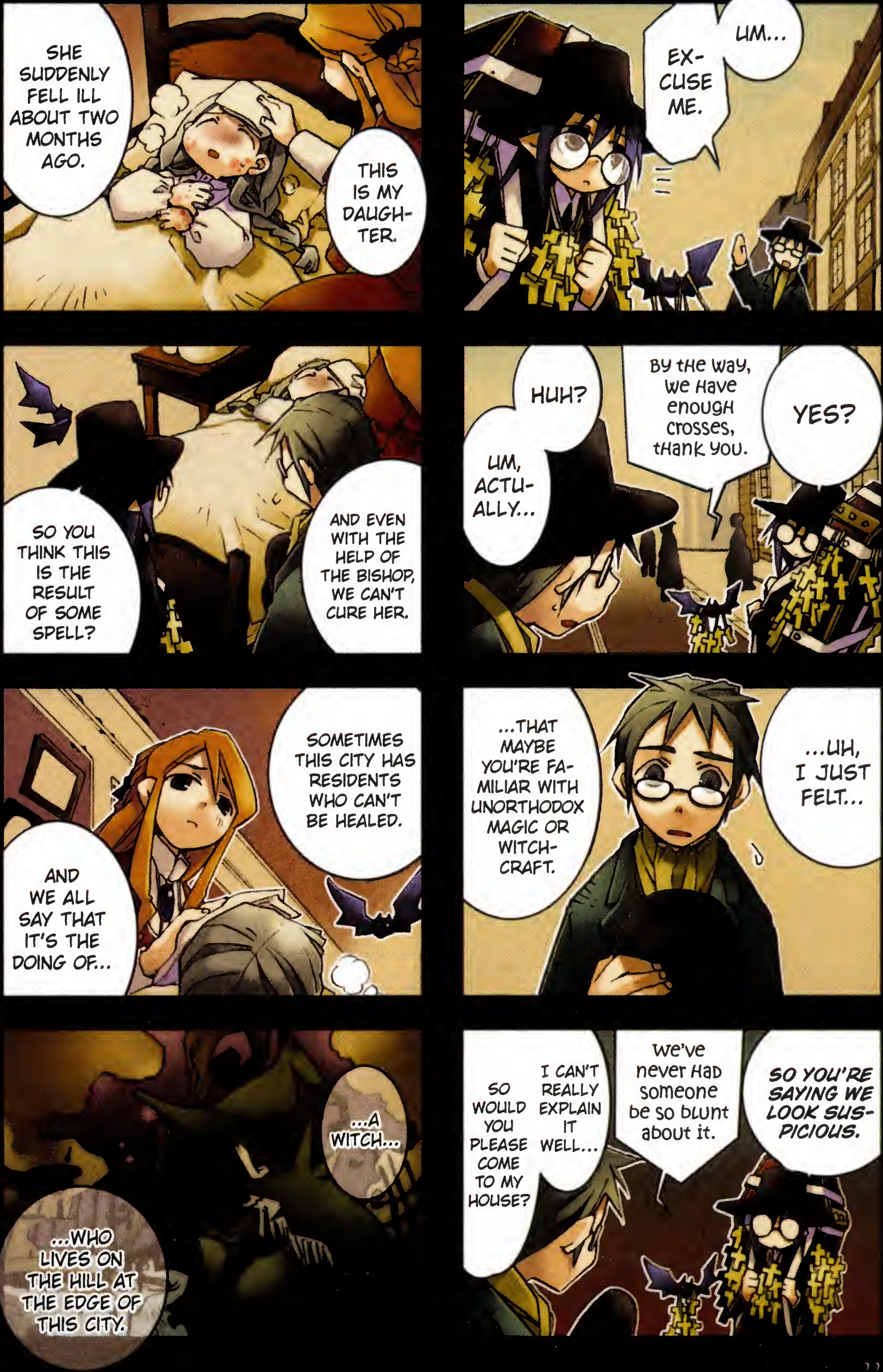

バサ
FLAP
EEE-EEK.
THESE ARE ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS, RIGHT?
バサ
FLAP
.........
NO.
I WON'T.
ARE YOU FRIGHTENED?
OH, UM...
YOU CAN BE HONEST.
I'M USED TO PEOPLE BEING SCARED OF ME.
BECAUSE...
...THERE'S NO WAY SOMEONE WITH SUCH WARM HANDS...
SMILE
...COULD BE A DEVIL.
WHAT IF...
...I LIED ABOUT BEING A TRAVELER...
...AND I'M REALLY THE DEVIL WHO LIVES IN THIS FOREST?
.........
Hey.
I found some lights in that direction.
WE FOUND IT 'COS IT'S DARK.
WOBBLE WOBBLE
WOULD...
...YOU LET GO OF MY HAND?
......?
You have a weird look on your face.
What were you guys doing when I was gone!?

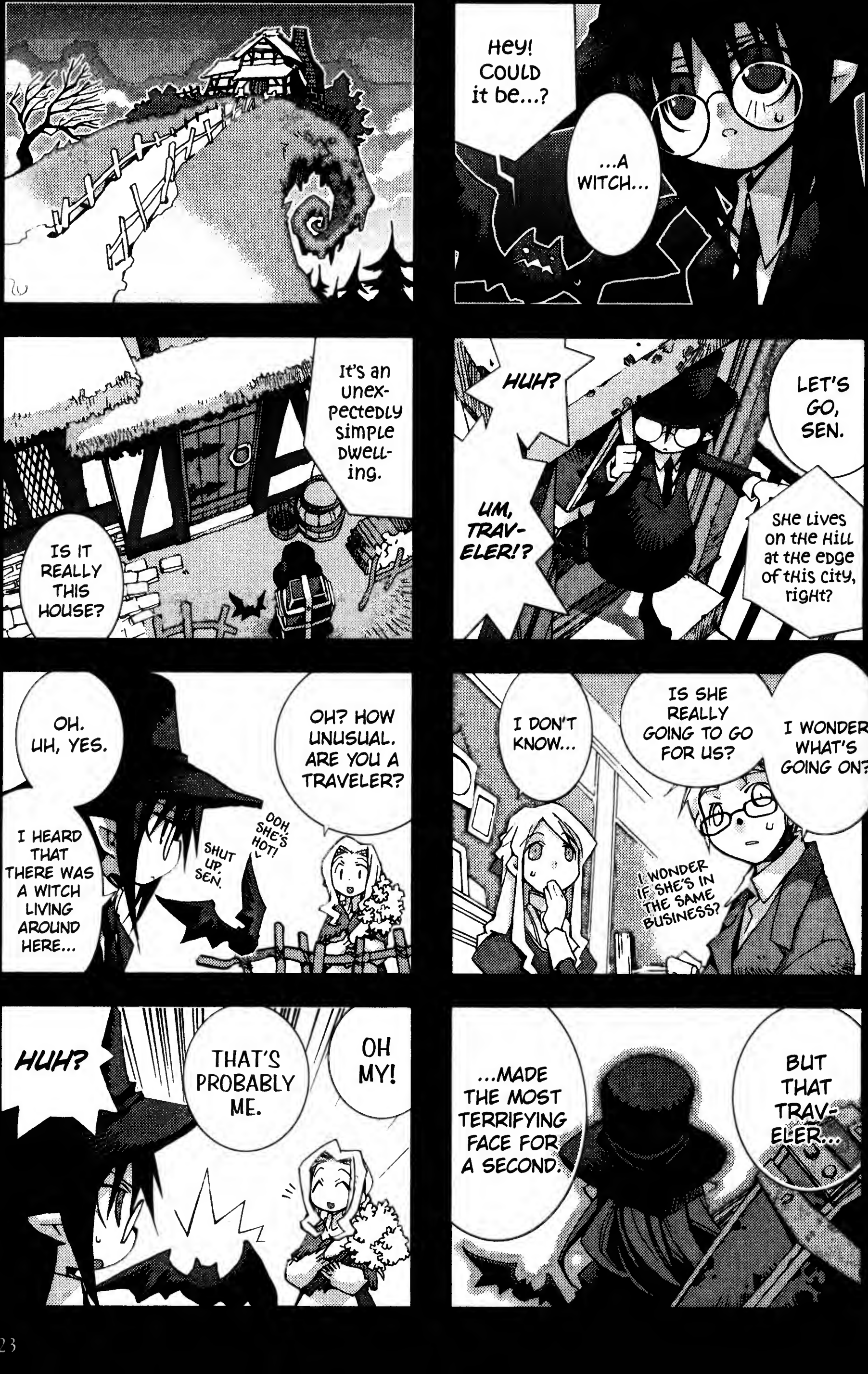

DID YOU FIND HER?
NO... NOT YET.
FLAP FLAP
DAD! MOM!!
NO-ELLE!!
SHOOT...
WE CAN'T RISK GOING FARTHER INTO THE FOREST.
OH, NOELLE...
DON'T CAUSE US SUCH HEARTACHE, NOELLE.
I'M SORRY...
BUT I'M GLAD YOU'RE SAFE.
SFX: HAHAHAHA
DO YOU THINK NOELLE WAS KILLED BY THE DEVIL?
DEVIL?
WHAT'S THAT?
NO WAY!
ARE YOU A TRAVELER?
THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY DAUGHTER.
I JUST HAPPENED TO PASS BY, THAT'S ALL.
THAT'S JUST A FIB WE TOLD KIDS TO STOP THEM FROM GOING INTO THE FOREST.
THERE'S NO WAY THERE'S SOMEONE DRESSED IN BLACK CARRYING A COFFIN.
RUSTLE
THANK YOU.
POOR THING, FROM WHAT I SEE, *YOU LOST A FELLOW TRAVELER*, TOO.
YES.
Don't agree just because you got too lazy for explanations.

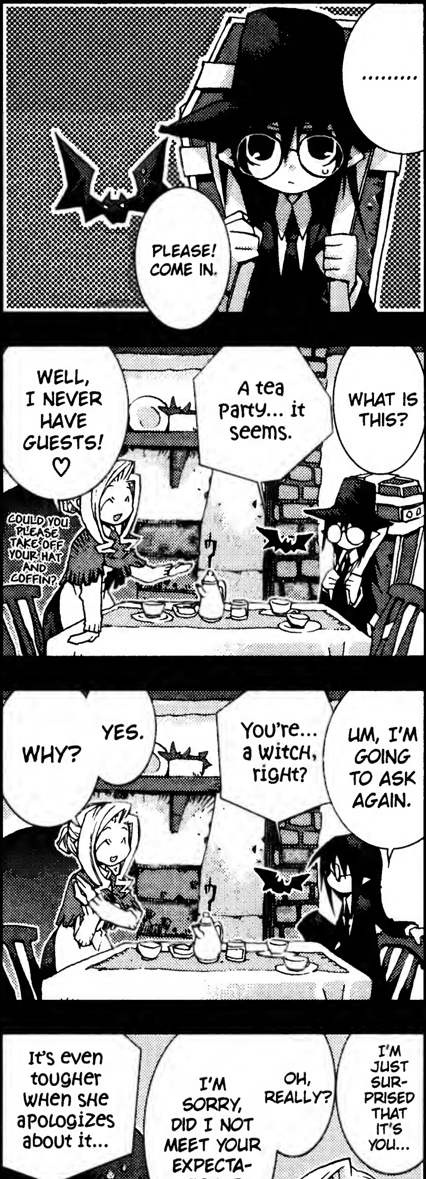

GOOD MORNING, MOM.
OH, YOU'RE AWAKE.
YOU SLEPT ALL DAY YESTERDAY, YOU KNOW.
WHERE DID THE TRAVELER GO?
SHE LEFT ALREADY.
SO SOON!?
SHE WAS LOOKING AROUND VARIOUS PLACES IN THE VILLAGE YESTERDAY...
...BUT SHE TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT SHE TOOK CARE OF HER BUSINESS.
OH...
I DIDN'T GET TO ASK...
...FOR HER NAME...

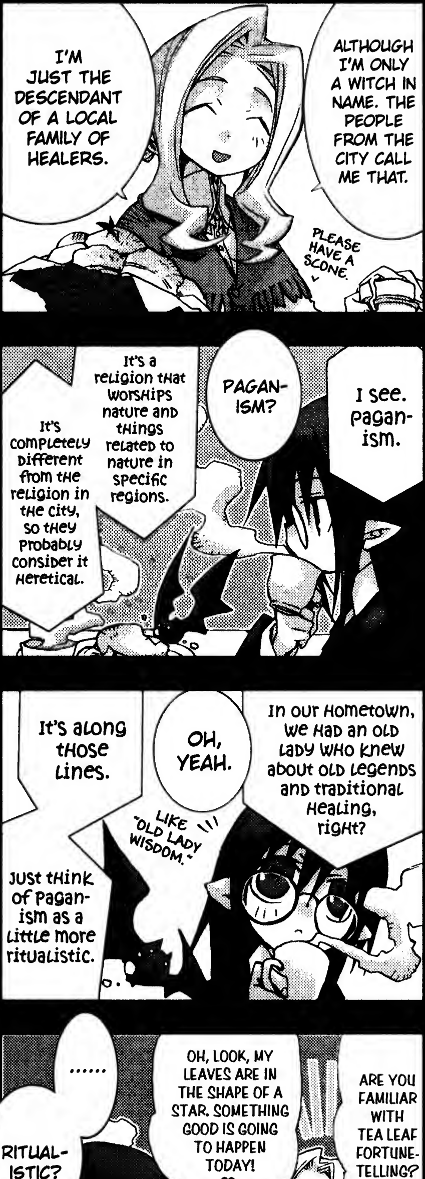

They were a pretty interesting group.
Hey, what's up? You've been looking at your hand since yesterday.
IT'S NOTHING.
But you know, that coffin of yours...
...is a problem no matter where you go.
WHY don't you just throw it away?
.........
I CAN'T...
...DO THAT.
BECAUSE IF I STAY THIS WAY...
...BY THE TIME MY JOURNEY ENDS,
...I'M GOING TO NEED IT.

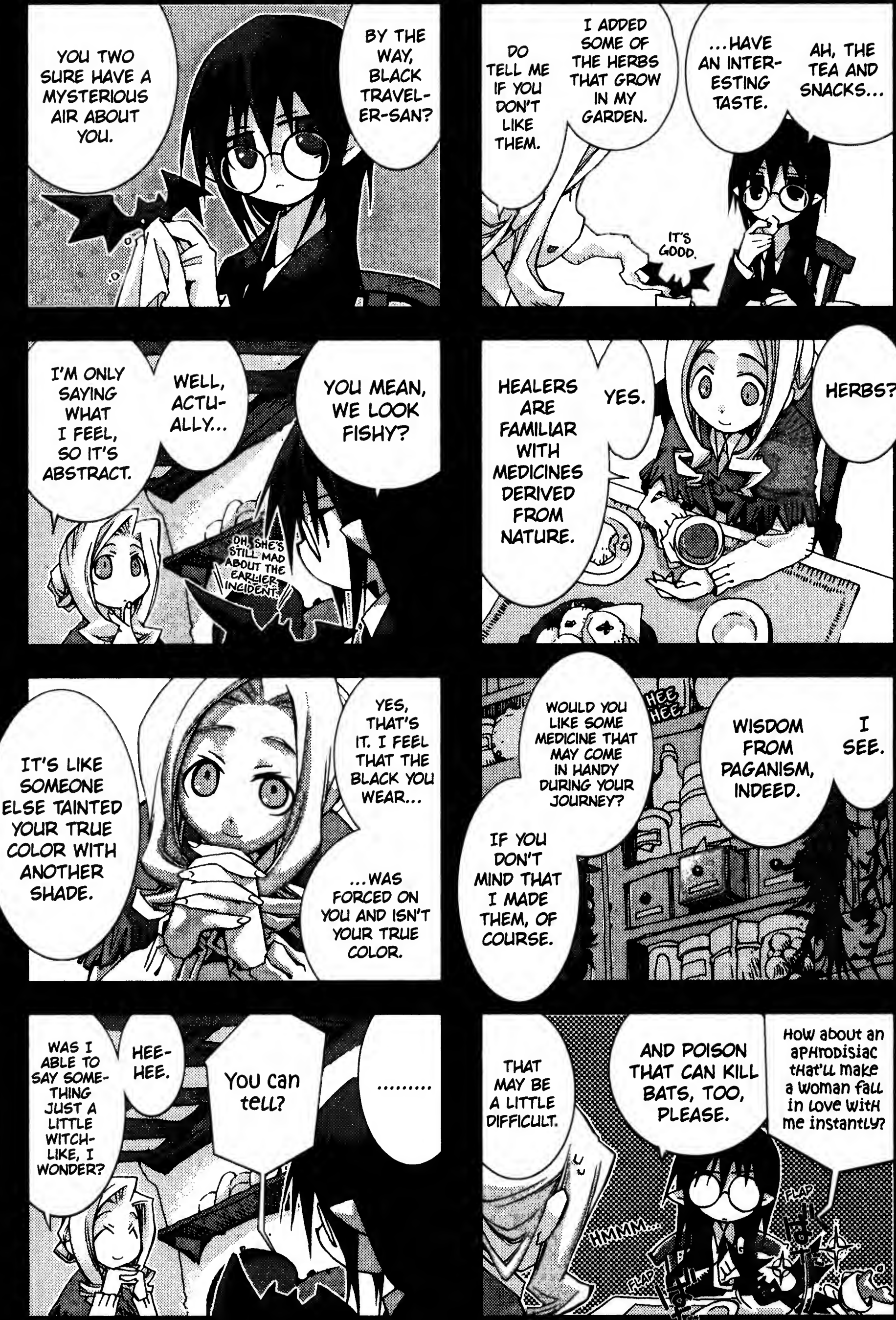

WHAT AN AMAZING CATHEDRAL.
BEFORE, THERE WAS NOTHING AROUND HERE.
BUT IT GREW TO BE A BIG CITY...
...THANKS TO THE SPREAD OF RELIGION.
I SEE.
AND FOR THAT REASON, THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY...
...ARE ALL PRETTY RELIGIOUS.
I SEE. THAT'S WHY...
...ALL THE PASSERSBY ARE GIVING ME BLESSINGS AND AMULETS.
I wonder if we look that unfortunate.
HAVE A SAFE TRIP!
CLATTER

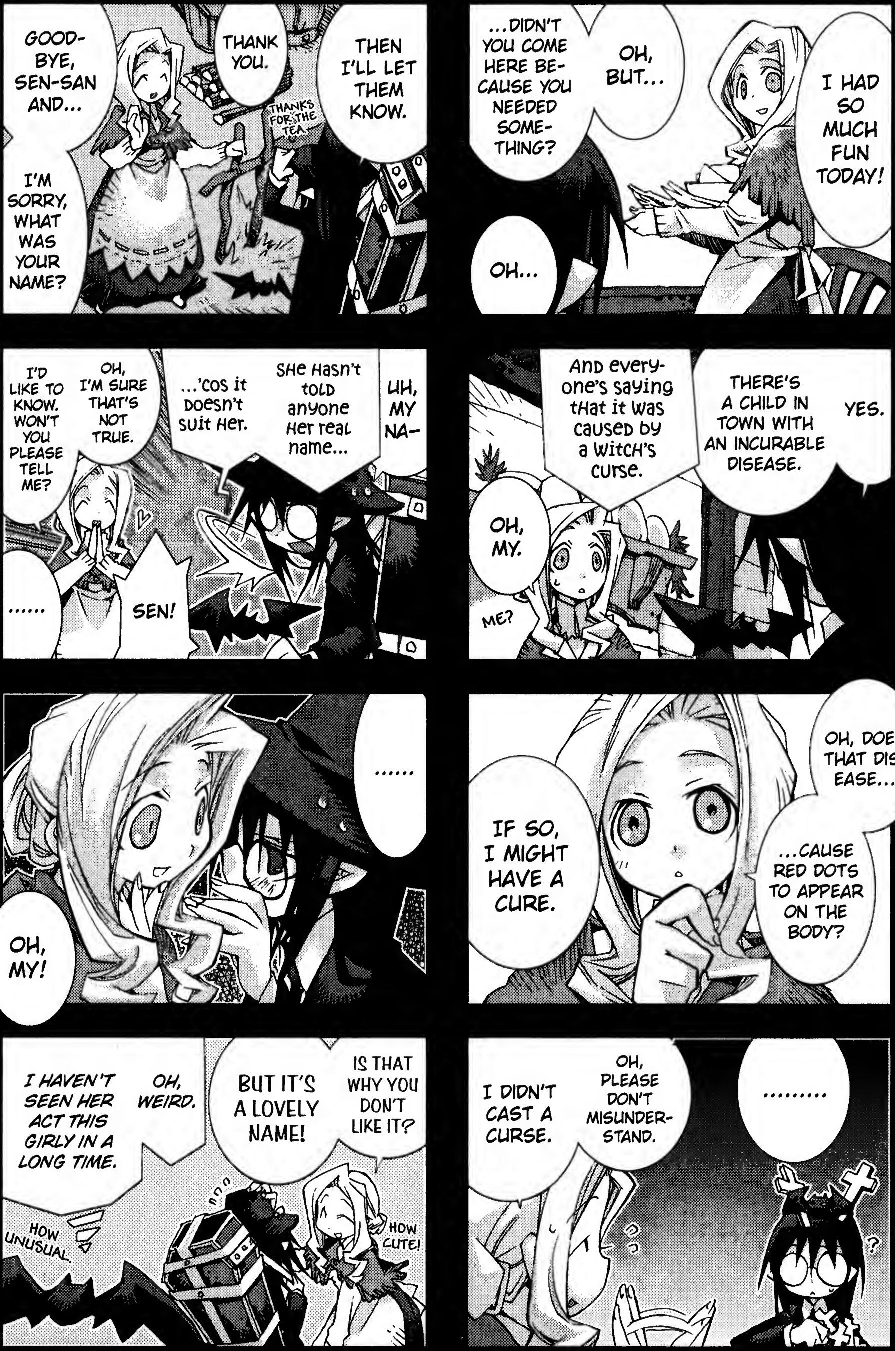

UM...
EXCUSE ME.
YES?
By the way, we have enough crosses, thank you.
HUH?
UM, ACTUALLY...
...UH, I JUST FELT...
...THAT MAYBE YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH UNORTHODOX MAGIC OR WITCHCRAFT.
SO YOU'RE SAYING WE LOOK SUSPICIOUS.
We've never had someone be so blunt about it.
I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN IT WELL...
SO WOULD YOU PLEASE COME TO MY HOUSE?
THIS IS MY DAUGHTER.
SHE SUDDENLY FELL ILL ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO.
AND EVEN WITH THE HELP OF THE BISHOP, WE CAN'T CURE HER.
SO YOU THINK THIS IS THE RESULT OF SOME SPELL?
SOMETIMES THIS CITY HAS RESIDENTS WHO CAN'T BE HEALED.
AND WE ALL SAY THAT IT'S THE DOING OF...
...A WITCH...
...WHO LIVES ON THE HILL AT THE EDGE OF THIS CITY.

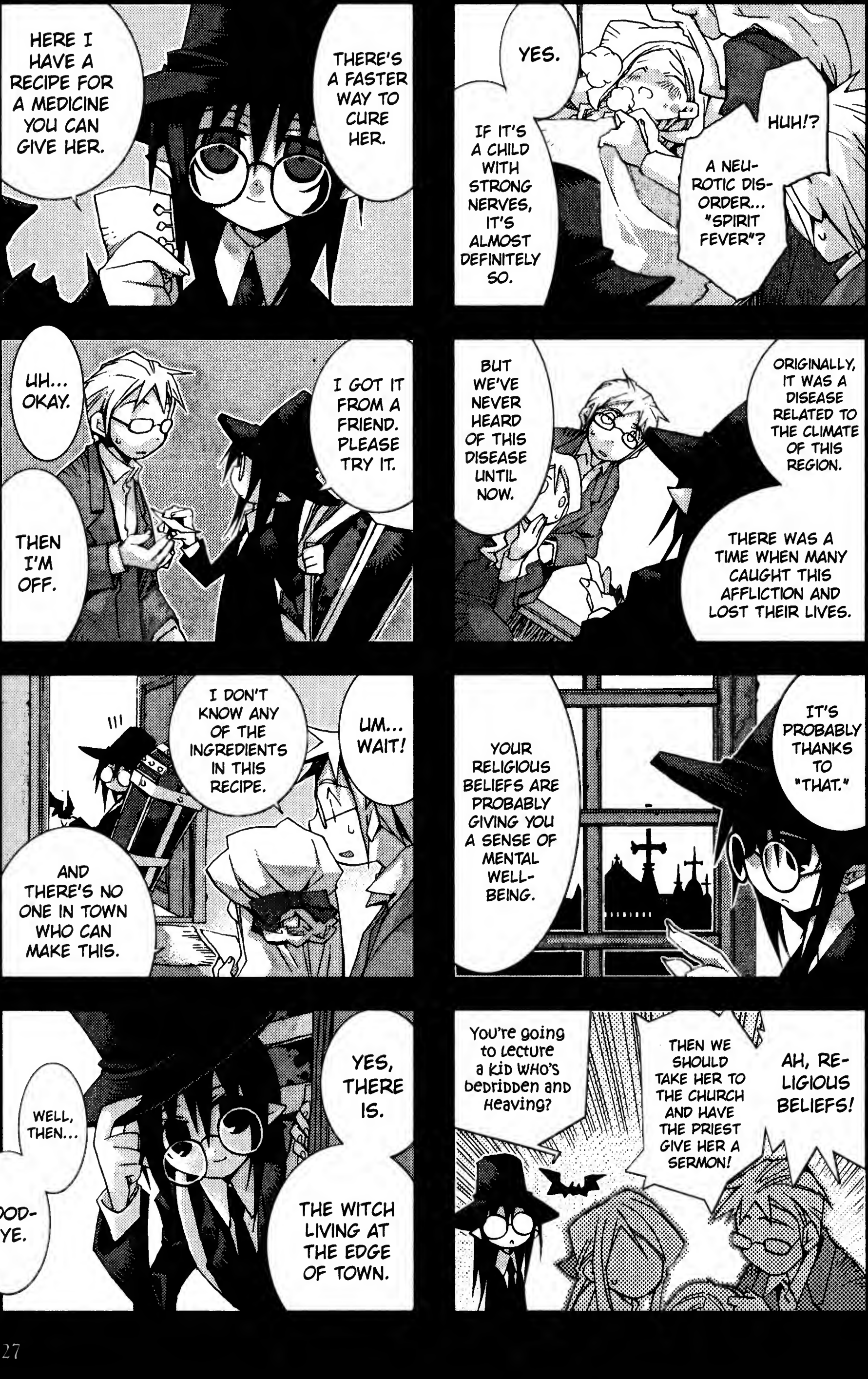

Hey! Could it be...?
...A WITCH...
LET'S GO, SEN.
She lives on the hill at the edge of this city, right?
HUH?
UM, TRAVELER!?
It's an unexpectedly simple dwelling.
IS IT REALLY THIS HOUSE?
I WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON?
IS SHE REALLY GOING TO GO FOR US?
I DON'T KNOW...
I WONDER IF SHE'S IN THE SAME BUSINESS?
OH? HOW UNUSUAL. ARE YOU A TRAVELER?
OH. UH, YES.
I HEARD THAT THERE WAS A WITCH LIVING AROUND HERE...
OOH, SHE'S HOT!
SHUT UP, SEN.
BUT THAT TRAVELER...
...MADE THE MOST TERRIFYING FACE FOR A SECOND.
OH MY!
THAT'S PROBABLY ME.
HUH?

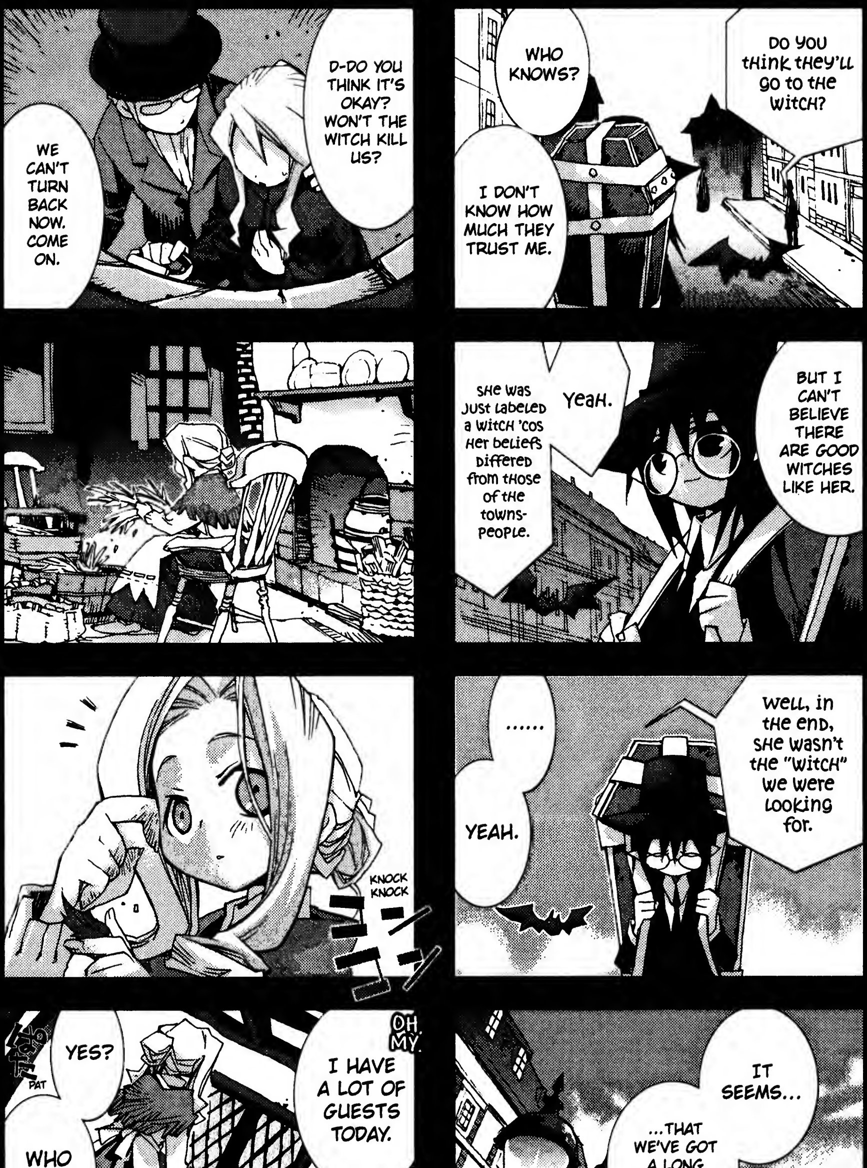

........
PLEASE! COME IN.
WHAT IS THIS?
A tea party... it seems.
WELL, I NEVER HAVE GUESTS! ♡
COULD YOU PLEASE TAKE OFF YOUR HAT AND COFFIN?
UM, I'M GOING TO ASK AGAIN.
You're... a witch, right?
YES.
WHY?
I'M JUST SURPRISED THAT IT'S YOU...
OH, REALLY?
I'M SORRY, DID I NOT MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?
It's even tougher when she apologizes about it...


ALTHOUGH I'M ONLY A WITCH IN NAME. THE PEOPLE FROM THE CITY CALL ME THAT.
I'M JUST THE DESCENDANT OF A LOCAL FAMILY OF HEALERS.
PLEASE HAVE A SCONE.
I see. paganism.
PAGANISM?
It's a religion that worships nature and things related to nature in specific regions.
It's completely different from the religion in the city, so they probably consider it heretical.
In our hometown, we had an old lady who knew about old legends and traditional healing, right?
OH, YEAH.
LIKE "OLD LADY WISDOM."
It's along those lines.
Just think of paganism as a little more ritualistic.
ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH TEA LEAF FORTUNE-TELLING?
OH, LOOK, MY LEAVES ARE IN THE SHAPE OF A STAR. SOMETHING GOOD IS GOING TO HAPPEN TODAY! ♡
......
RITUALISTIC?
IT'S MORE LIKE LITTLE GIRLS' FORTUNE-TELLING.

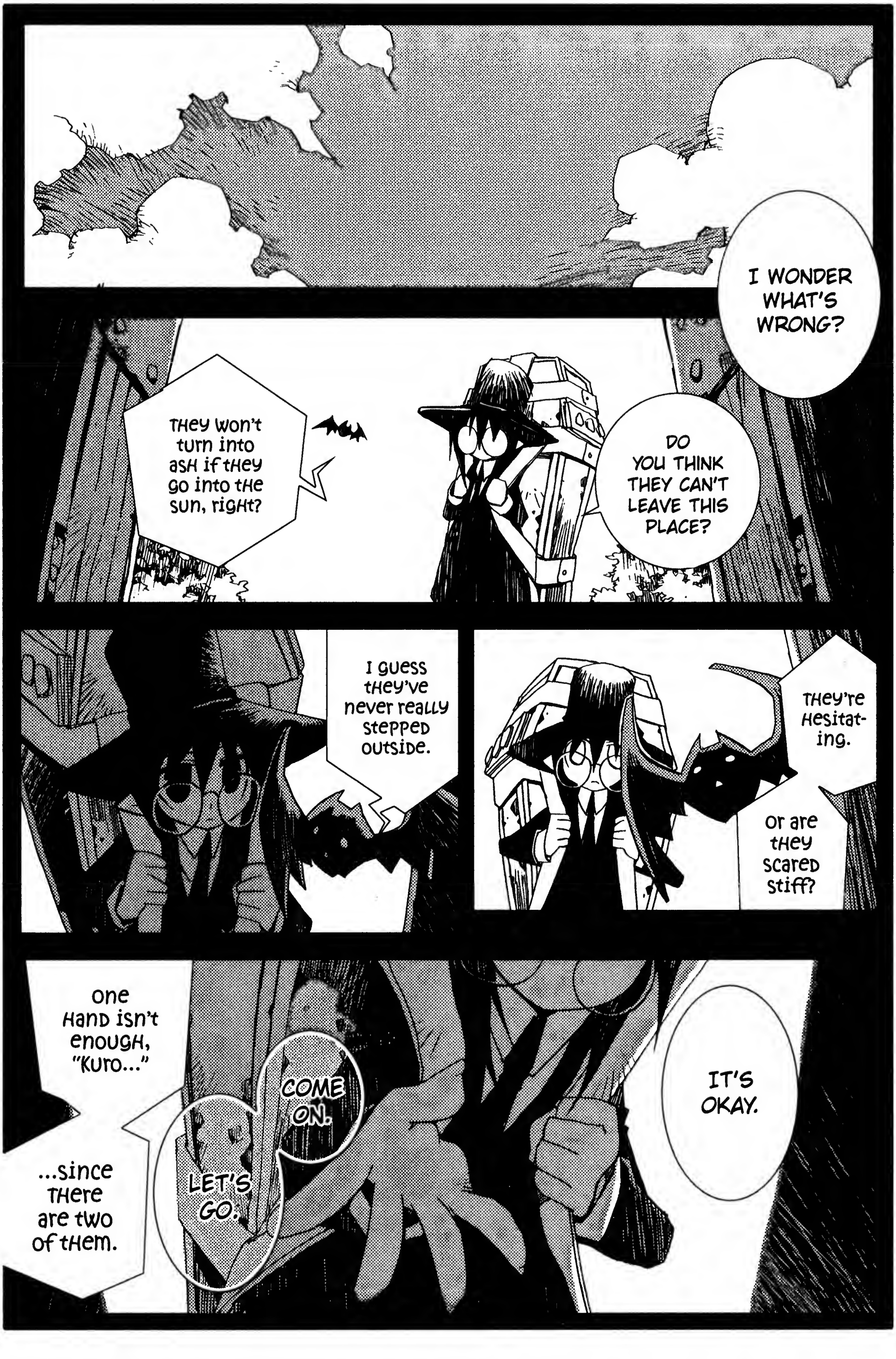

AH, THE TEA AND SNACKS...
...HAVE AN INTERESTING TASTE.
I ADDED SOME OF THE HERBS THAT GROW IN MY GARDEN.
DO TELL ME IF YOU DON'T LIKE THEM.
IT'S GOOD.
HERBS?
YES.
HEALERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH MEDICINES DERIVED FROM NATURE.
I SEE.
WISDOM FROM PAGANISM, INDEED.
HEE HEE
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME MEDICINE THAT MAY COME IN HANDY DURING YOUR JOURNEY?
IF YOU DON'T MIND THAT I MADE THEM, OF COURSE.
How about an aphrodisiac that'll make a woman fall in love with me instantly?
AND POISON THAT CAN KILL BATS, TOO, PLEASE.
THAT MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT.
HMMM...
FLAP
FLAP
BY THE WAY, BLACK TRAVELER-SAN?
YOU TWO SURE HAVE A MYSTERIOUS AIR ABOUT YOU.
YOU MEAN, WE LOOK FISHY?
WELL, ACTUALLY...
I'M ONLY SAYING WHAT I FEEL, SO IT'S ABSTRACT.
OH, SHE'S STILL MAD ABOUT THE EARLIER INCIDENT.
YES, THAT'S IT. I FEEL THAT THE BLACK YOU WEAR...
...WAS FORCED ON YOU AND ISN'T YOUR TRUE COLOR.
IT'S LIKE SOMEONE ELSE TAINTED YOUR TRUE COLOR WITH ANOTHER SHADE.
.........
You can tell?
HEE-HEE.
WAS I ABLE TO SAY SOMETHING JUST A LITTLE WITCH-LIKE, I WONDER?

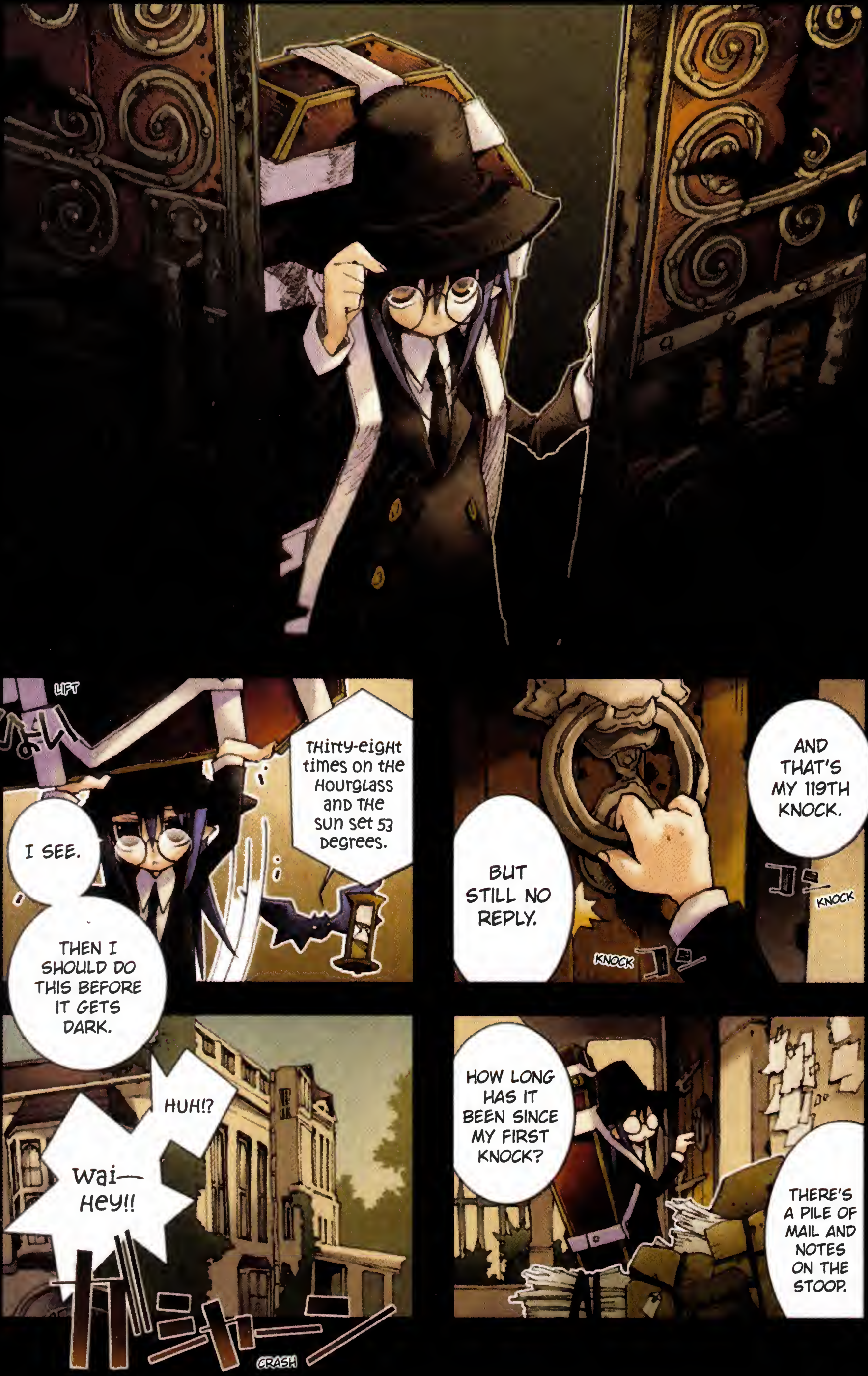

I HAD SO MUCH FUN TODAY!
OH, BUT...
...DIDN'T YOU COME HERE BECAUSE YOU NEEDED SOMETHING?
OH...
YES.
THERE'S A CHILD IN TOWN WITH AN INCURABLE DISEASE.
And everyone's saying that it was caused by a witch's curse.
OH, MY.
ME?
OH, DOES THAT DISEASE...
...CAUSE RED DOTS TO APPEAR ON THE BODY?
IF SO, I MIGHT HAVE A CURE.
.........
OH, PLEASE DON'T MISUNDERSTAND.
I DIDN'T CAST A CURSE.
THEN I'LL LET THEM KNOW.
THANK YOU.
THANKS FOR THE TEA.
GOOD-BYE, SEN-SAN AND...
I'M SORRY, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME?
UH, MY NA—
SHE Hasn't told anyone Her real name...
...'cos it doesn't suit Her.
OH, I'M SURE THAT'S NOT TRUE.
I'D LIKE TO KNOW. WON'T YOU PLEASE TELL ME?
SEN!
......
......
OH, MY!
IS THAT WHY YOU DON'T LIKE IT?
BUT IT'S A LOVELY NAME!
HOW CUTE!
OH, WEIRD.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER ACT THIS GIRLY IN A LONG TIME.
HOW UNUSUAL.

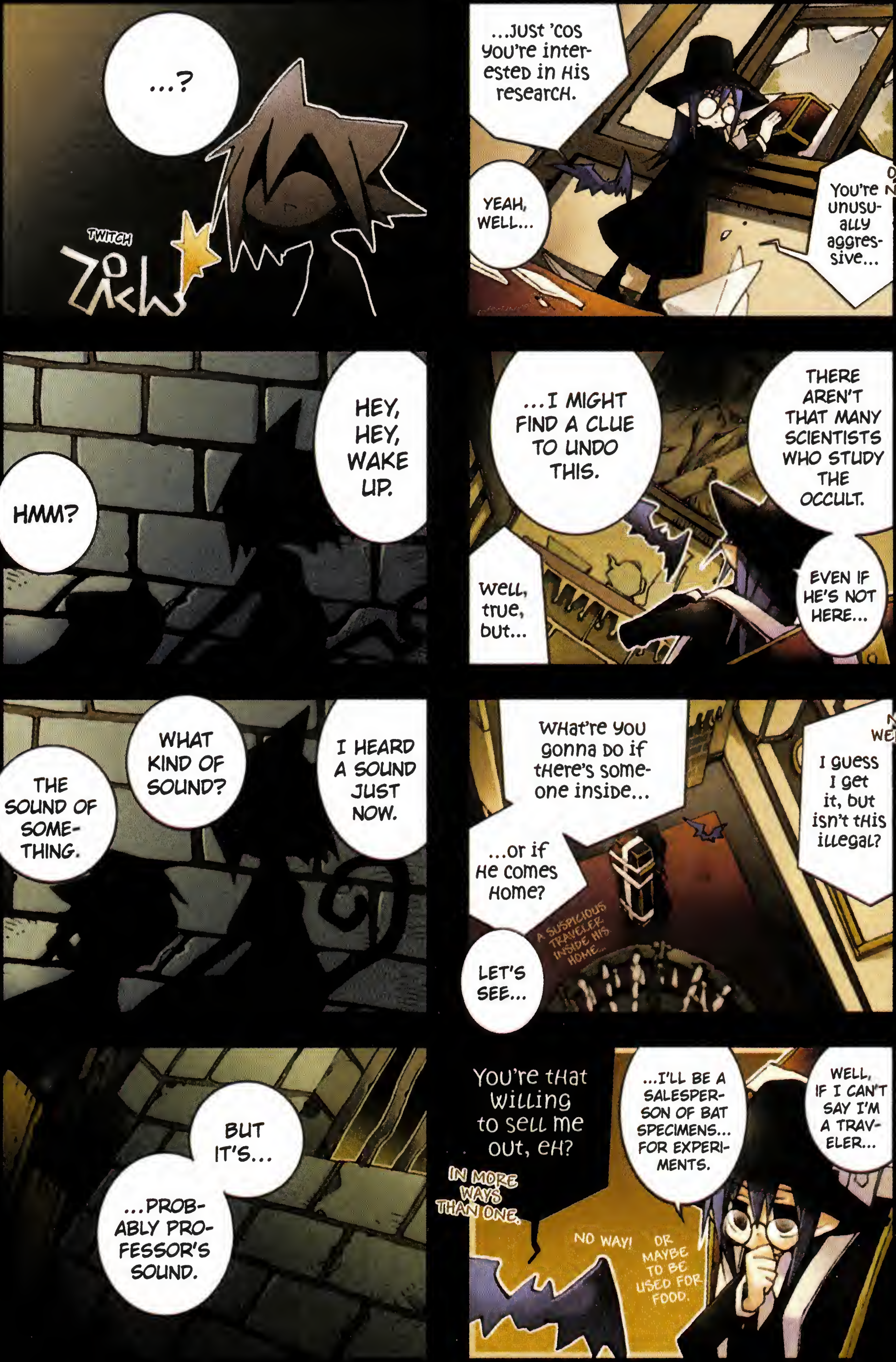

HUH!?
A NEUROTIC DISORDER... "SPIRIT FEVER"?
YES.
IF IT'S A CHILD WITH STRONG NERVES, IT'S ALMOST DEFINITELY SO.
ORIGINALLY, IT WAS A DISEASE RELATED TO THE CLIMATE OF THIS REGION.
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN MANY CAUGHT THIS AFFLICTION AND LOST THEIR LIVES.
BUT WE'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS DISEASE UNTIL NOW.
IT'S PROBABLY THANKS TO "THAT."
YOUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ARE PROBABLY GIVING YOU A SENSE OF MENTAL WELL-BEING.
AH, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS!
THEN WE SHOULD TAKE HER TO THE CHURCH AND HAVE THE PRIEST GIVE HER A SERMON!
You're going to lecture a kid who's bedridden and heaving?
THERE'S A FASTER WAY TO CURE HER.
HERE I HAVE A RECIPE FOR A MEDICINE YOU CAN GIVE HER.
I GOT IT FROM A FRIEND. PLEASE TRY IT.
UH... OKAY.
THEN I'M OFF.
UM... WAIT!
I DON'T KNOW ANY OF THE INGREDIENTS IN THIS RECIPE.
AND THERE'S NO ONE IN TOWN WHO CAN MAKE THIS.
!!!
YES, THERE IS.
THE WITCH LIVING AT THE EDGE OF TOWN.
WELL, THEN...
GOODBYE.

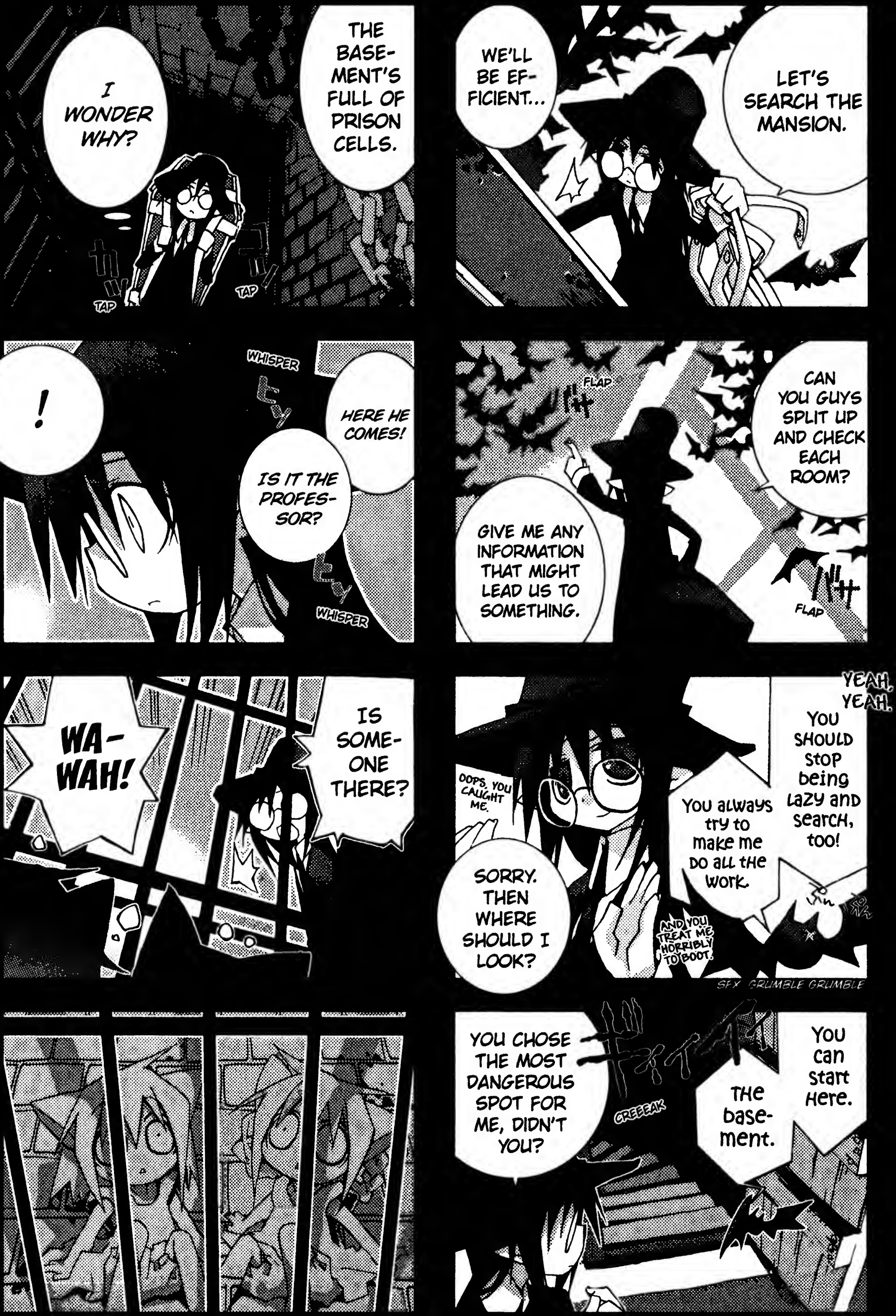

DO YOU think they'll go to the witch?
WHO KNOWS?
I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH THEY TRUST ME.
BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE ARE GOOD WITCHES LIKE HER.
Yeah.
she was just labeled a witch 'cos her beliefs differed from those of the towns-people.
well, in the end, she wasn't the "witch" we were looking for.
......
YEAH.
IT SEEMS...
...THAT WE'VE GOT A LONG WAY YET TO TRAVEL.
D-DO YOU THINK IT'S OKAY? WON'T THE WITCH KILL US?
WE CAN'T TURN BACK NOW. COME ON.
KNOCK KNOCK
OH, MY.
I HAVE A LOT OF GUESTS TODAY.
YES?
PAT
WHO IS IT?
PAT

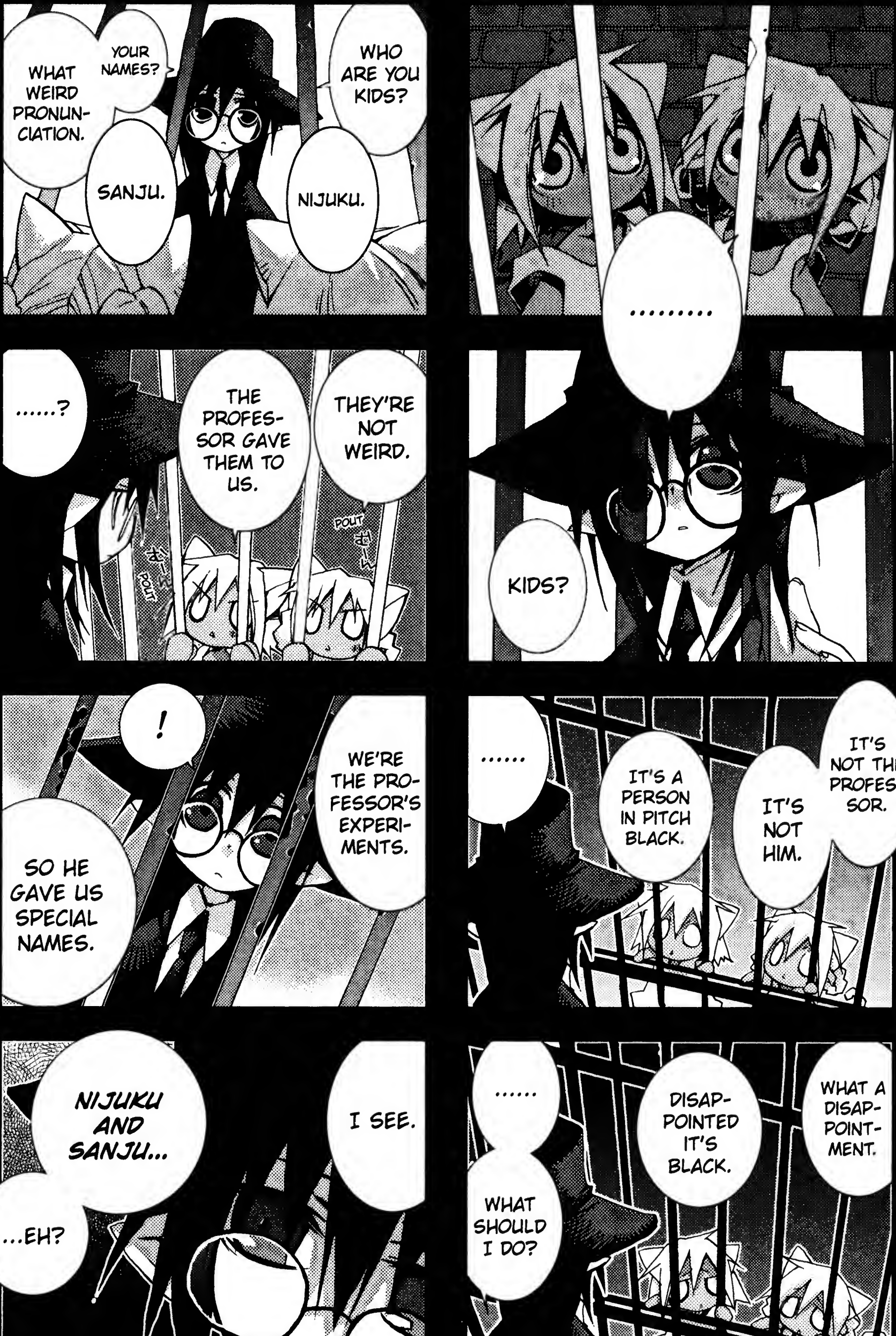
Shoulder-a-Coffin Kuro by Satoko Kiyuduki

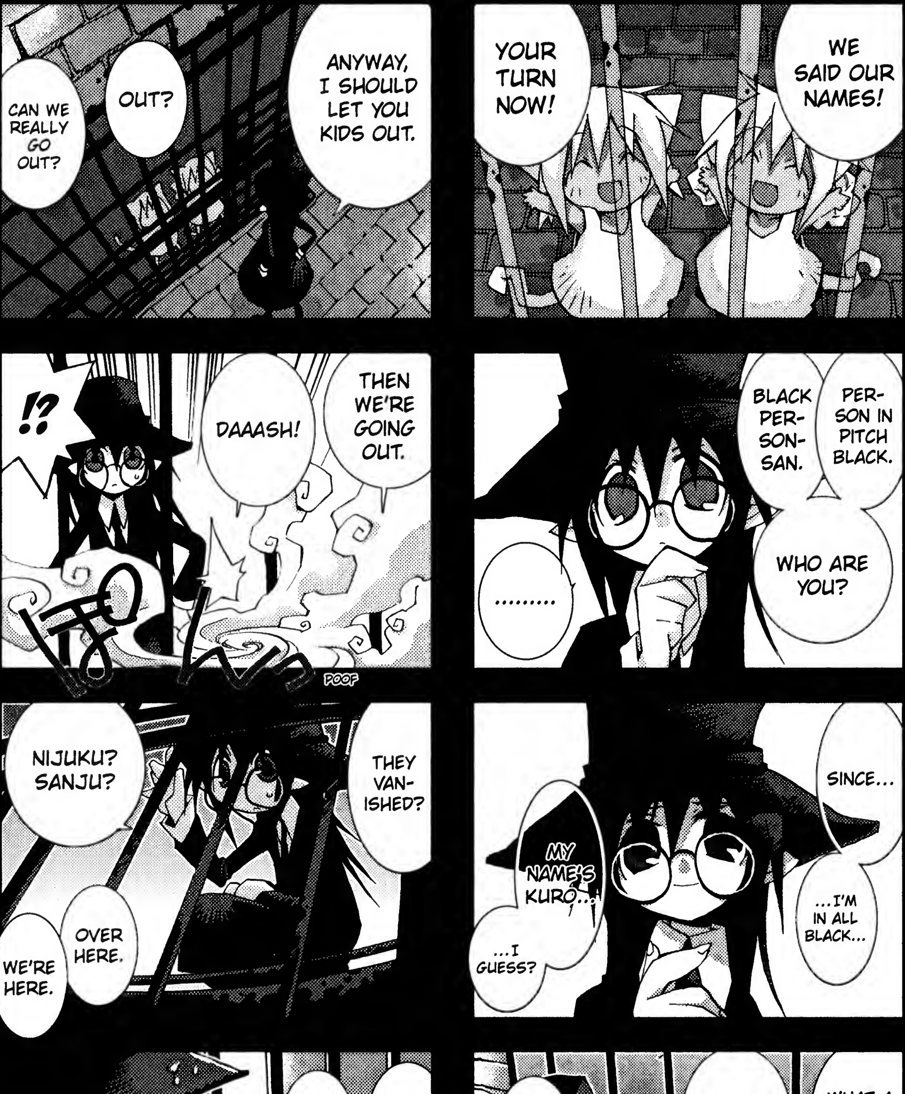

I WONDER WHAT'S WRONG?
DO YOU THINK THEY CAN'T LEAVE THIS PLACE?
They won't turn into ash if they go into the sun, right?
They're hesitat-ing.
Or are they scared stiff?
I guess they've never really stepped outside.
IT'S OKAY.
COME ON.
LET'S GO.
One hand isn't enough, "Kuro..."
...since there are two of them.

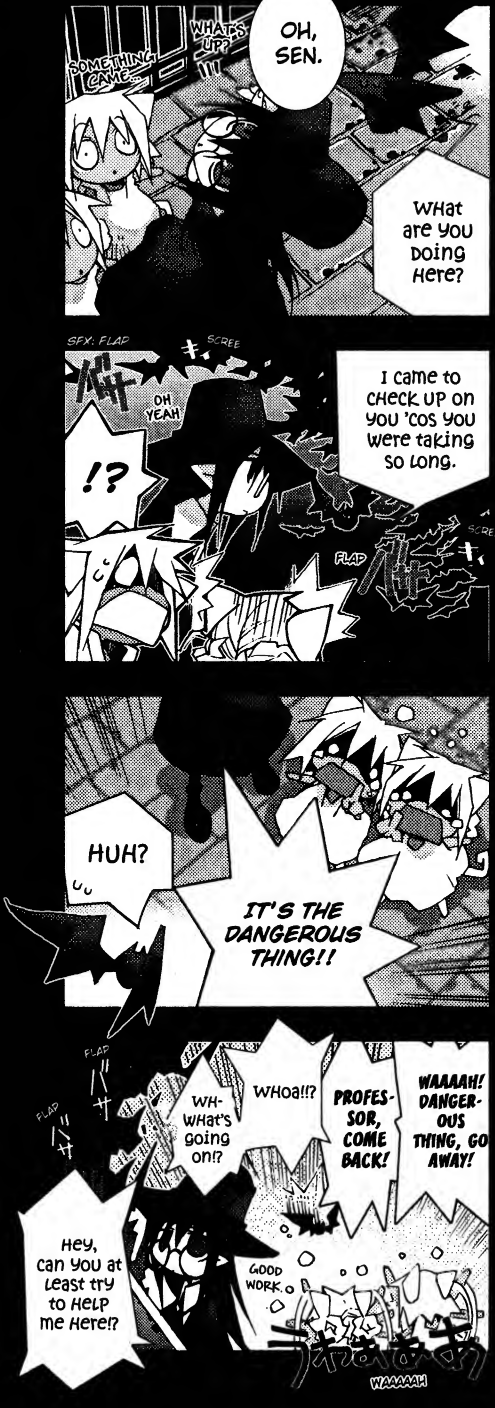

AND THAT'S MY 119TH KNOCK.
コン
KNOCK
BUT STILL NO REPLY.
コン
KNOCK
Thirty-eight times on the Hourglass and the sun set 53 degrees.
ひょい
LIFT
I SEE.
THEN I SHOULD DO THIS BEFORE IT GETS DARK.
THERE'S A PILE OF MAIL AND NOTES ON THE STOOP.
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE MY FIRST KNOCK?
HUH!?
Wai— Hey!!
ガシャーン
CRASH

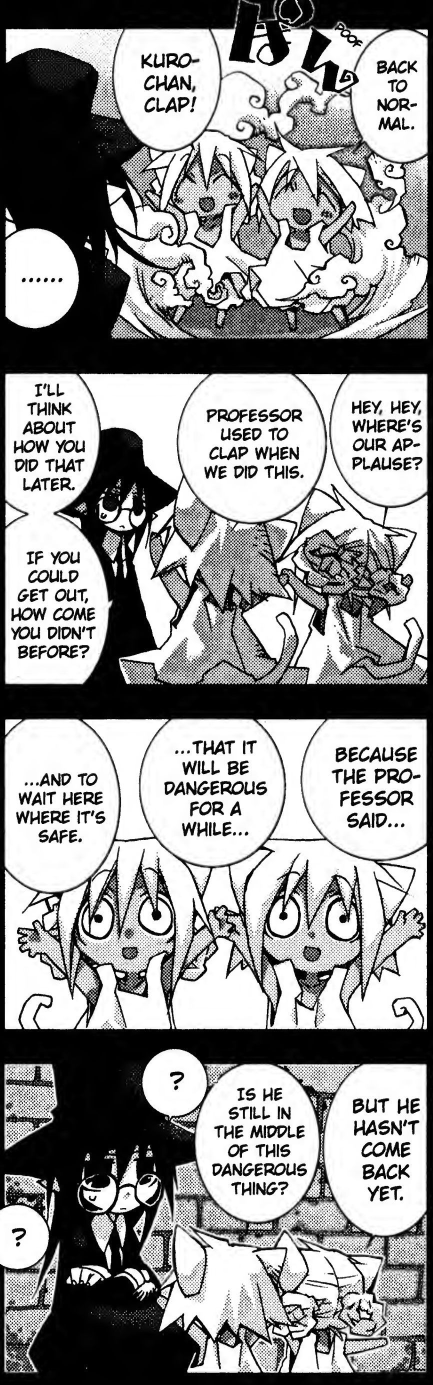

Oh, no.
You're unusually aggressive...
...Just 'cos you're interested in his research.
Yeah, well...
There aren't that many scientists who study the occult.
Even if he's not here...
...I might find a clue to undo this.
Well, true, but...
No, well...
I guess I get it, but isn't this illegal?
What're you gonna do if there's someone inside...
...or if he comes home?
Let's see...
A suspicious traveler inside his home...
Well, if I can't say I'm a traveler...
...I'll be a salesperson of bat specimens... for experiments.
Or maybe to be used for food.
No way!
You're that willing to sell me out, eh?
In more ways than one.
...?
Twitch
Hey, hey, wake up.
Hmm?
I heard a sound just now.
What kind of sound?
The sound of something.
But it's...
...probably professor's sound.

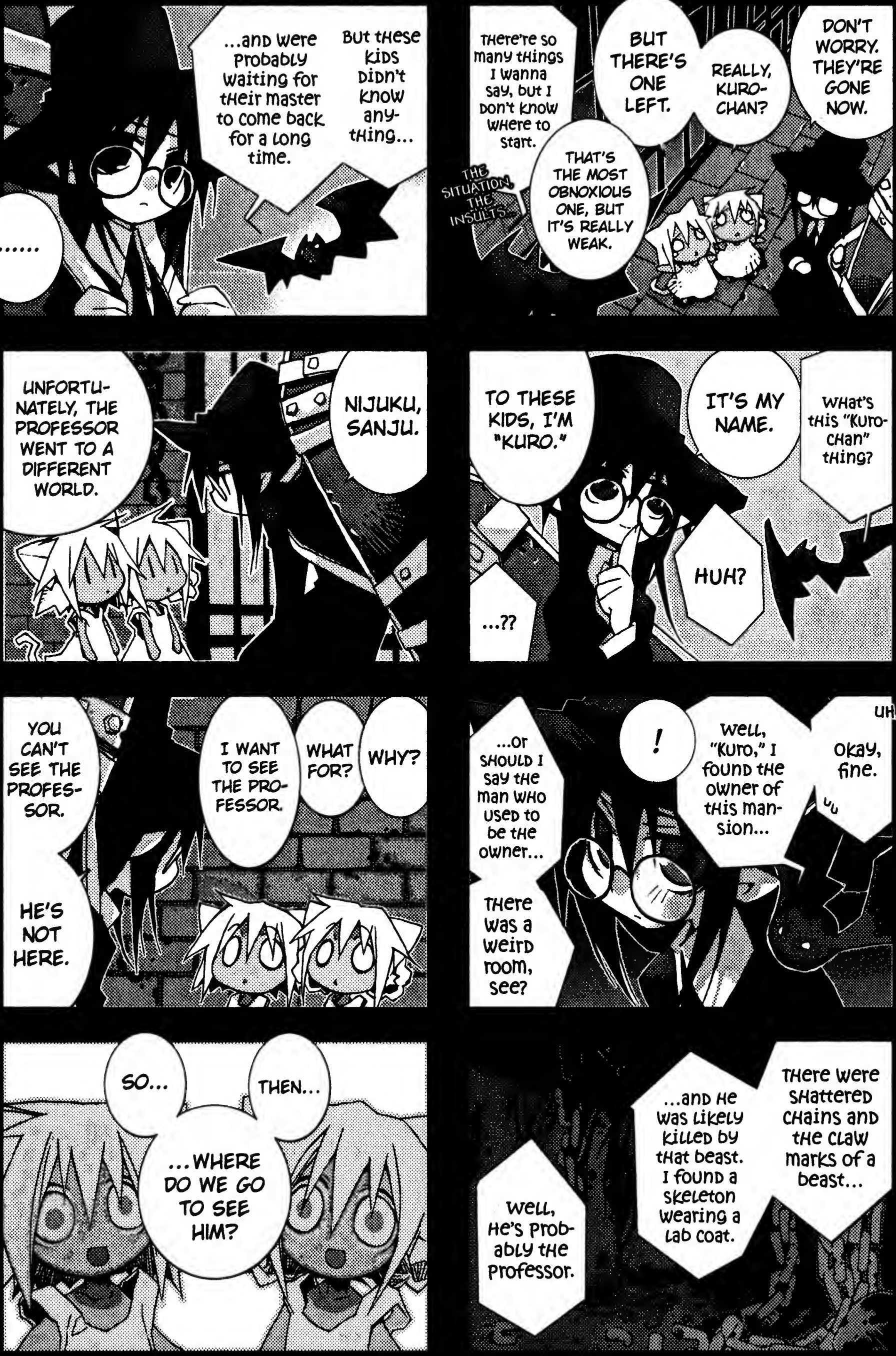

LET'S SEARCH THE MANSION.
WE'LL BE EFFICIENT...
CAN YOU GUYS SPLIT UP AND CHECK EACH ROOM?
FLAP
GIVE ME ANY INFORMATION THAT MIGHT LEAD US TO SOMETHING.
FLAP
YEAH, YEAH.
You should stop being lazy and search, too!
You always try to make me do all the work.
OOPS, YOU CAUGHT ME.
SORRY. THEN WHERE SHOULD I LOOK?
AND YOU TREAT ME HORRIBLY TO BOOT.
SFX GRUMBLE GRUMBLE
You can start here.
The basement.
CREEEAK
YOU CHOSE THE MOST DANGEROUS SPOT FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU?
THE BASEMENT'S FULL OF PRISON CELLS.
I WONDER WHY?
TAP
TAP
WHISPER
HERE HE COMES!
IS IT THE PROFESSOR?
WHISPER
!
IS SOMEONE THERE?
WA-WAH!

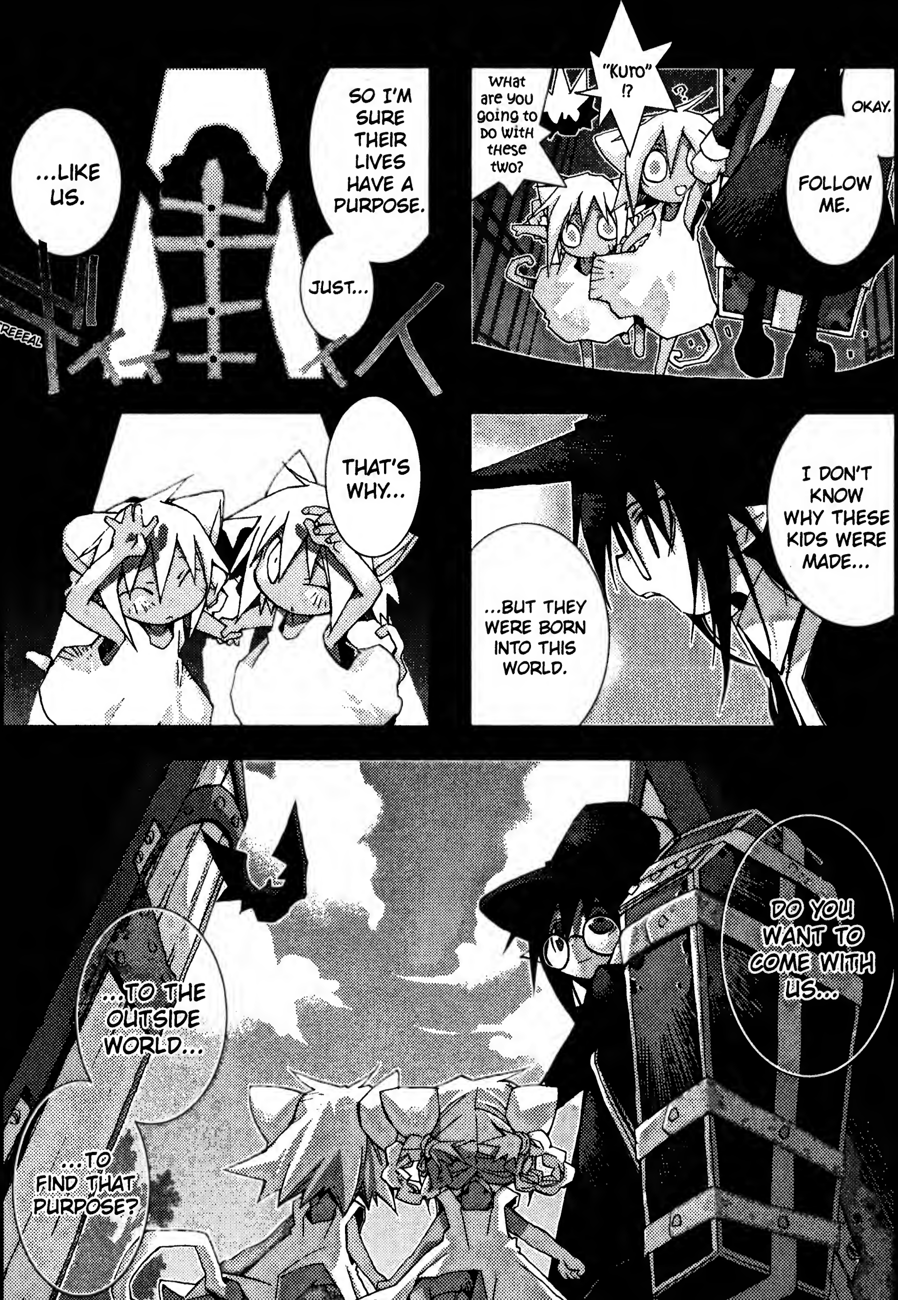

.........
KIDS?
IT'S NOT THE PROFESSOR.
IT'S NOT HIM.
IT'S A PERSON IN PITCH BLACK.
......
WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT.
DISAPPOINTED IT'S BLACK.
......
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHO ARE YOU KIDS?
YOUR NAMES?
NIJUKU.
SANJU.
WHAT WEIRD PRONUNCIATION.
THEY'RE NOT WEIRD.
THE PROFESSOR GAVE THEM TO US.
POUT
POUT
......?
WE'RE THE PROFESSOR'S EXPERIMENTS.
!
SO HE GAVE US SPECIAL NAMES.
I SEE.
NIJUKU AND SANJU...
...EH?

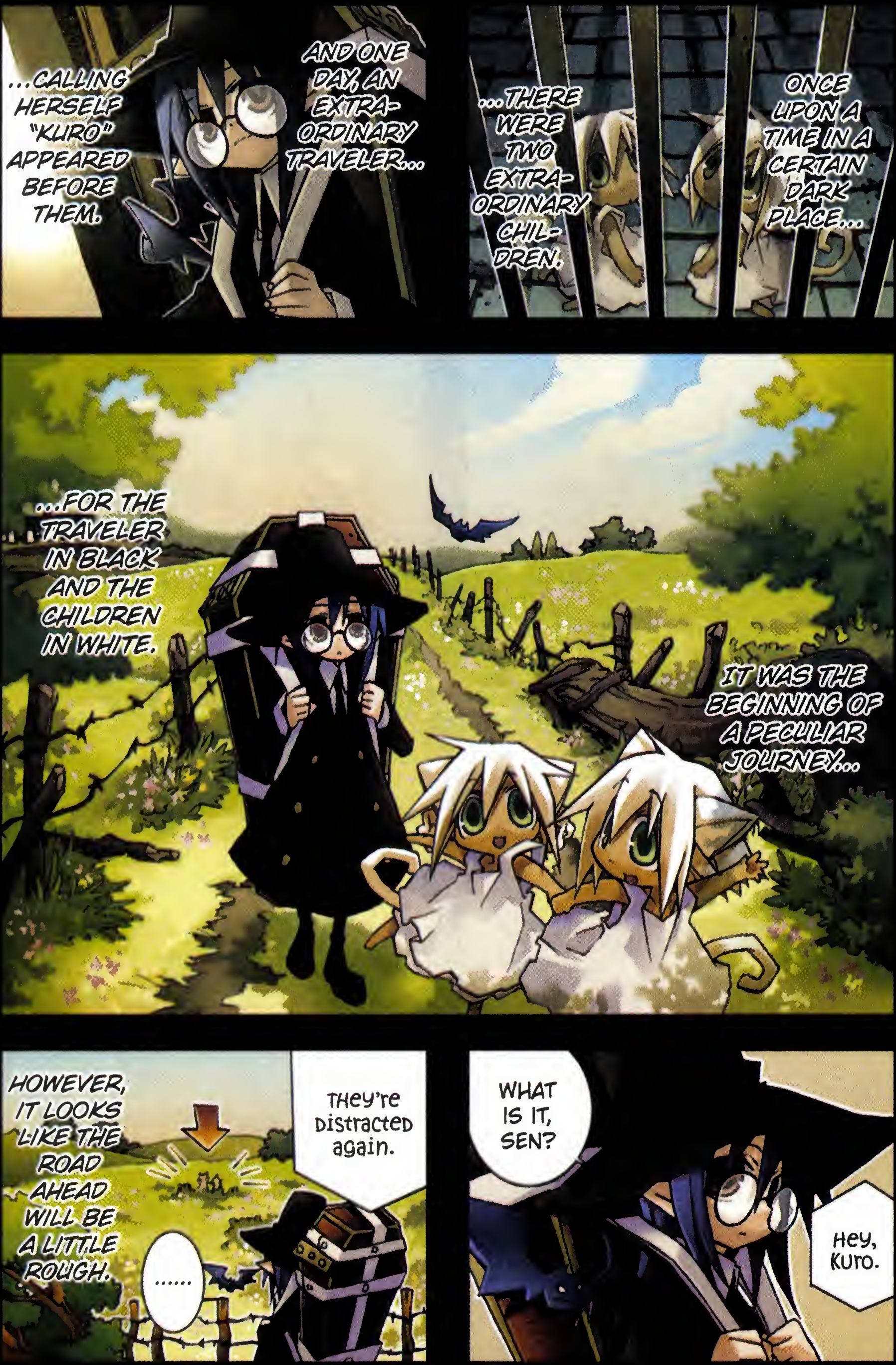

WE SAID OUR NAMES!
YOUR TURN NOW!
PERSON IN PITCH BLACK.
BLACK PERSON-SAN.
WHO ARE YOU?
.........
SINCE...
...I'M IN ALL BLACK...
MY NAME'S KURO...
...I GUESS?
WHAT A WEIRD NAME.
BUT IT'S PERFECT.
YEAH.
I THINK SO, TOO.
KURO-CHAN?
KURO-CHA?
ANYWAY, I SHOULD LET YOU KIDS OUT.
OUT?
CAN WE REALLY GO OUT?
THEN WE'RE GOING OUT.
DAAASH!
!?
POOF
THEY VANISHED?
NIJUKU? SANJU?
OVER HERE.
WE'RE HERE.
KURO-CHA.
OVER HERE.
WHOA!?
TINY

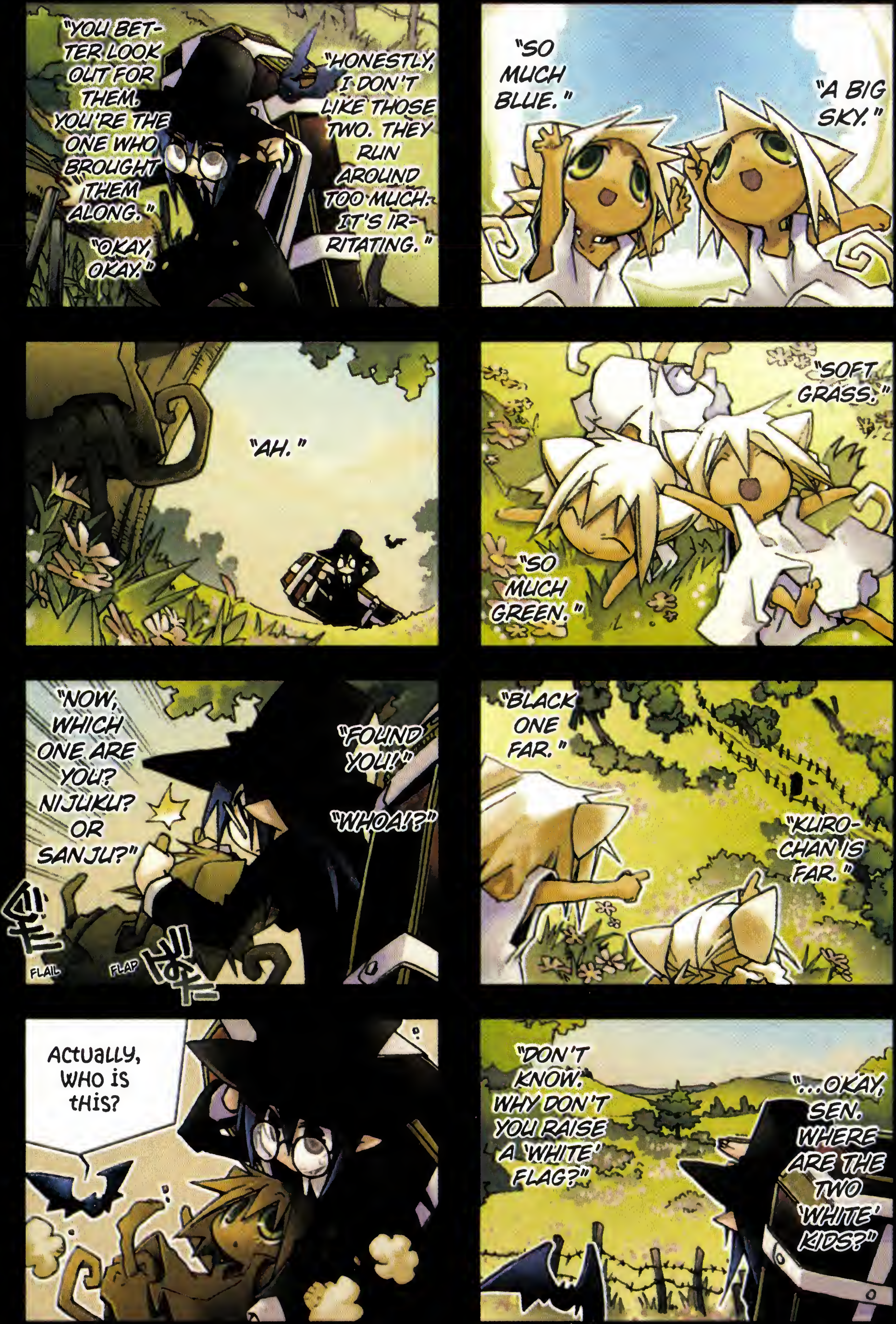

SOMETHING CAME...
WHAT'S UP?
OH, SEN.
What are you doing here?
SFX: FLAP
SCREE
OH YEAH
!?
I came to check up on you 'cos you were taking so long.
FLAP
SCREE
HUH?
IT'S THE DANGEROUS THING!!
FLAP
FLAP
WH-What's going on!?
WHoa!!?
PROFES-SOR, COME BACK!
WAAAAH! DANGER-OUS THING, GO AWAY!
Hey, can you at least try to help me here!?
GOOD WORK.
WAAAAAH

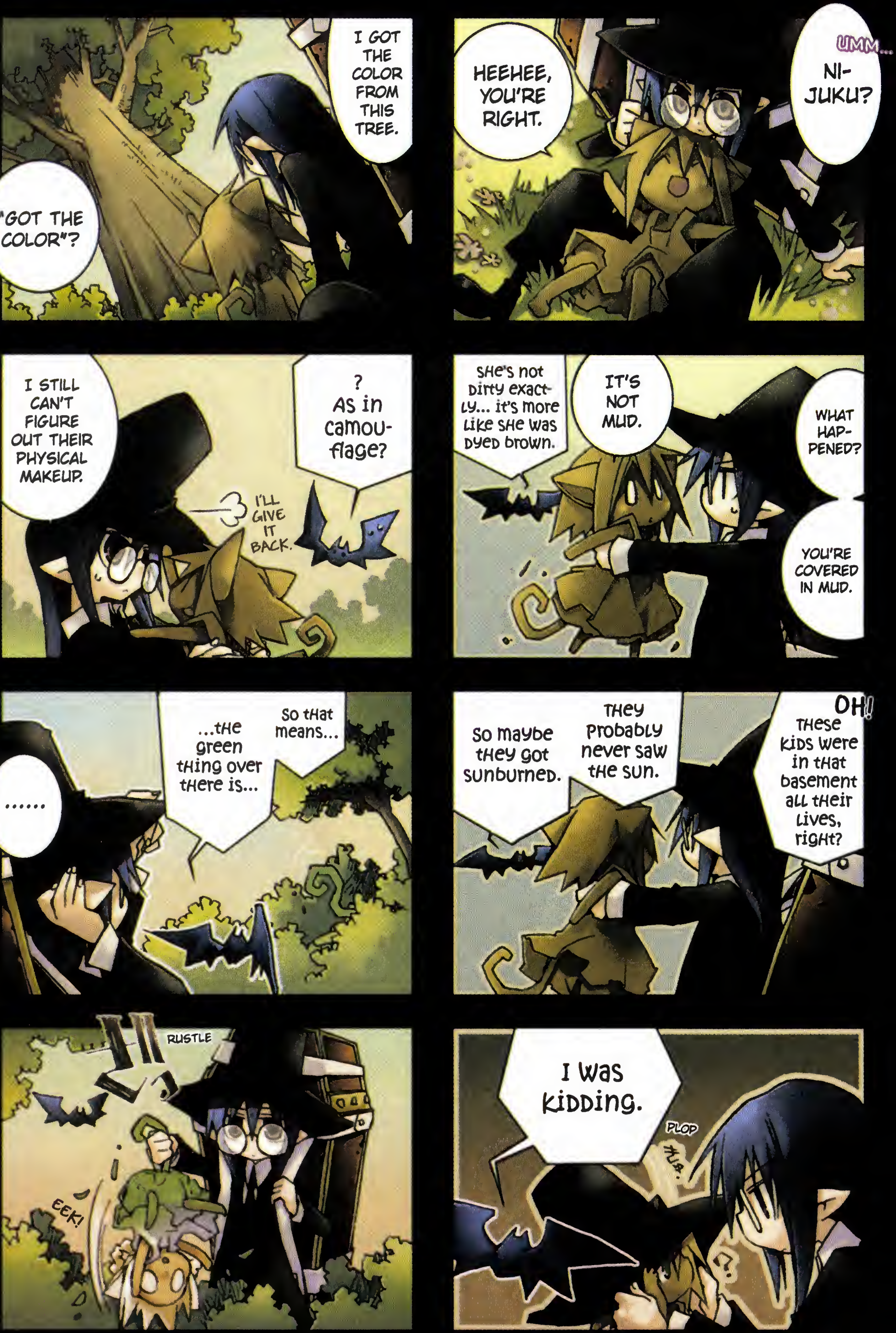

KURO-CHAN, CLAP!
POOF
BACK TO NOR-MAL.
......
I'LL THINK ABOUT HOW YOU DID THAT LATER.
PROFESSOR USED TO CLAP WHEN WE DID THIS.
HEY, HEY, WHERE'S OUR AP-PLAUSE?
IF YOU COULD GET OUT, HOW COME YOU DIDN'T BEFORE?
BECAUSE THE PRO-FESSOR SAID...
...THAT IT WILL BE DANGEROUS FOR A WHILE...
...AND TO WAIT HERE WHERE IT'S SAFE.
?
IS HE STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS DANGEROUS THING?
BUT HE HASN'T COME BACK YET.
?

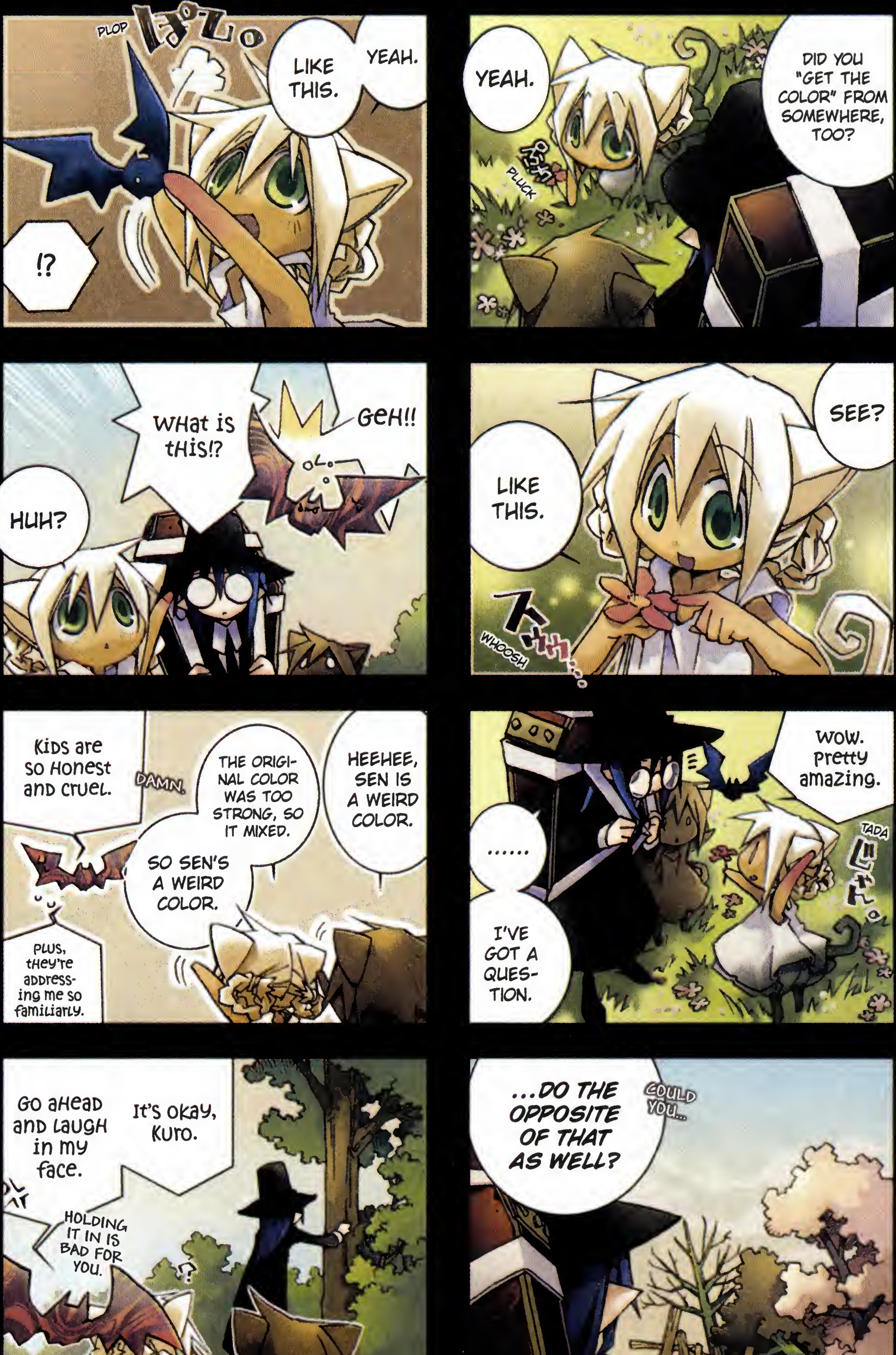

DON'T WORRY. THEY'RE GONE NOW.
REALLY, KURO-CHAN?
BUT THERE'S ONE LEFT.
There're so many things I wanna say, but I don't know where to start.
THE SITUATION, THE INSULTS...
THAT'S THE MOST OBNOXIOUS ONE, BUT IT'S REALLY WEAK.
But these kids didn't know anything...
...and were probably waiting for their master to come back for a long time.
......
What's this "Kuro-chan" thing?
IT'S MY NAME.
TO THESE KIDS, I'M "KURO."
HUH?
...??
NIJUKU, SANJU.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE PROFESSOR WENT TO A DIFFERENT WORLD.
UH...
Okay, fine.
Well, "Kuro," I found the owner of this mansion...
!
...or SHOULD I say the man who used to be the owner...
There was a weird room, see?
WHY?
WHAT FOR?
I WANT TO SEE THE PROFESSOR.
YOU CAN'T SEE THE PROFESSOR.
HE'S NOT HERE.
There were shattered chains and the claw marks of a beast...
...and he was likely killed by that beast. I found a skeleton wearing a lab coat.
Well, he's probably the professor.
THEN...
SO...
...WHERE DO WE GO TO SEE HIM?

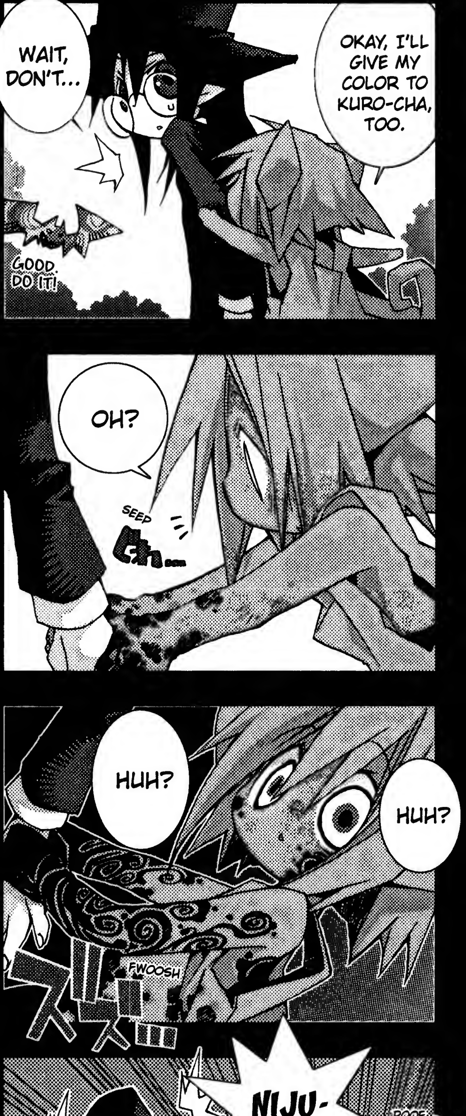

OKAY.
FOLLOW ME.
"Kuro" !?
What are you going to do with these two?
SO I'M SURE THEIR LIVES HAVE A PURPOSE.
JUST...
...LIKE US.
CREEEAL
I DON'T KNOW WHY THESE KIDS WERE MADE...
...BUT THEY WERE BORN INTO THIS WORLD.
THAT'S WHY...
DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH US...
...TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD...
...TO FIND THAT PURPOSE?

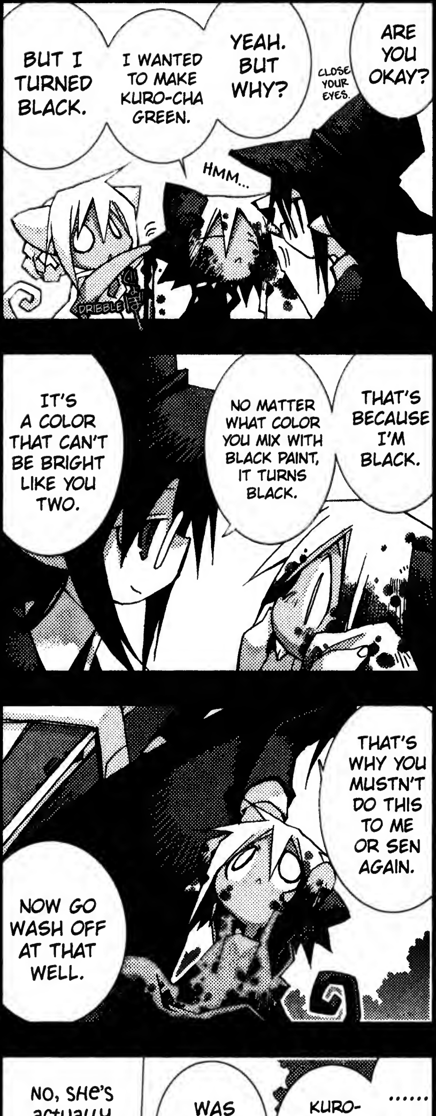

ONCE UPON A TIME IN A CERTAIN DARK PLACE...
...THERE WERE TWO EXTRAORDINARY CHILDREN.
AND ONE DAY, AN EXTRAORDINARY TRAVELER...
...CALLING HERSELF "KURO" APPEARED BEFORE THEM.
IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A PECULIAR JOURNEY...
...FOR THE TRAVELER IN BLACK AND THE CHILDREN IN WHITE.
Hey, Kuro.
WHAT IS IT, SEN?
They're distracted again.
......
HOWEVER, IT LOOKS LIKE THE ROAD AHEAD WILL BE A LITTLE ROUGH.

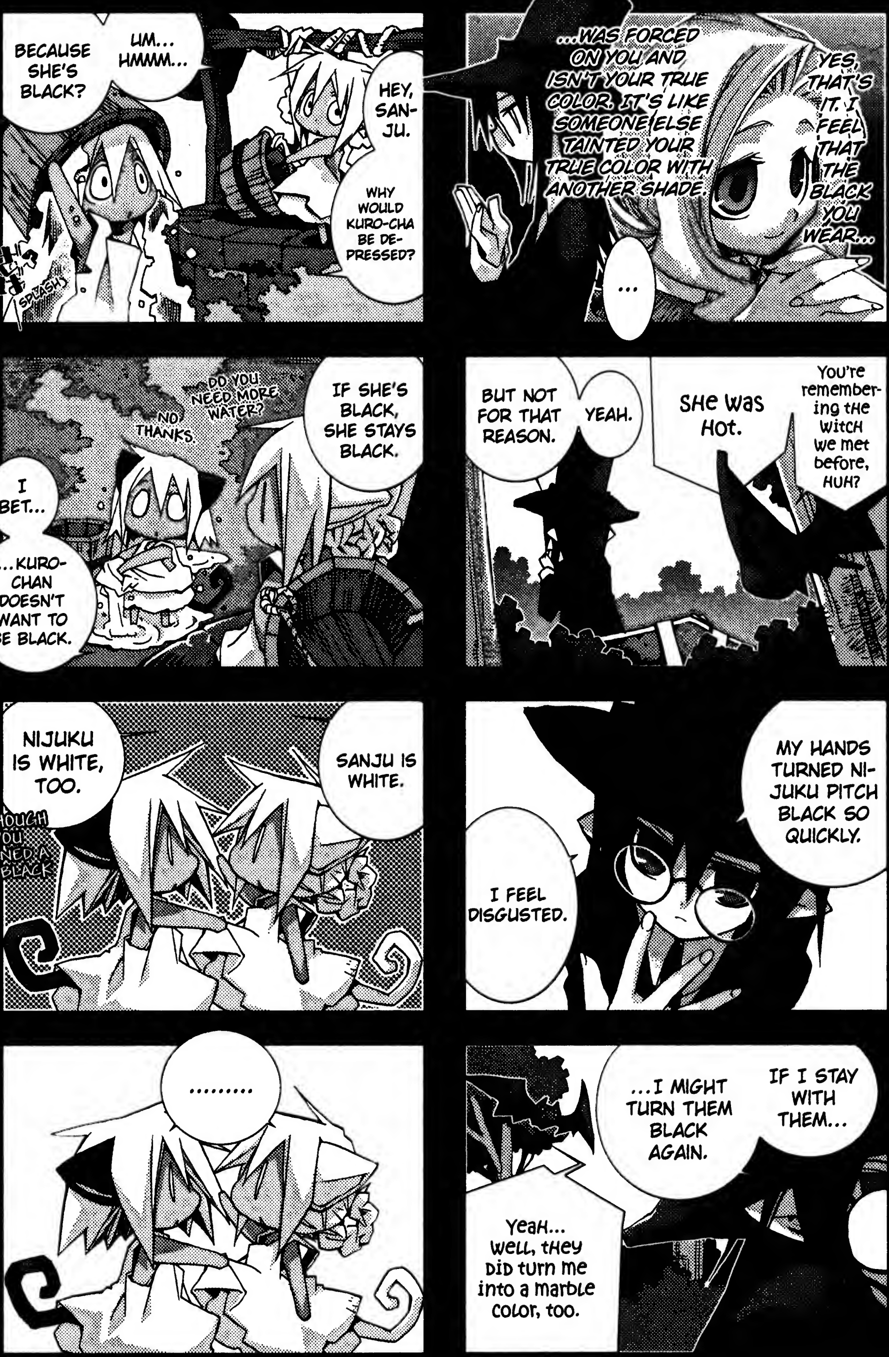

"YOU BETTER LOOK OUT FOR THEM. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THEM ALONG."
"HONESTLY, I DON'T LIKE THOSE TWO. THEY RUN AROUND TOO MUCH. IT'S IRRITATING."
"OKAY, OKAY."
"SO MUCH BLUE."
"A BIG SKY."
"AH."
"SOFT GRASS."
"SO MUCH GREEN."
"NOW, WHICH ONE ARE YOU? NIJUKU? OR SANJU?"
"FOUND YOU!"
"WHOA!?"
FLAIL
FLAP
"BLACK ONE FAR."
"KURO-CHAN IS FAR."
Actually, who is this?
"DON'T KNOW. WHY DON'T YOU RAISE A 'WHITE' FLAG?"
"...OKAY, SEN. WHERE ARE THE TWO 'WHITE' KIDS?"

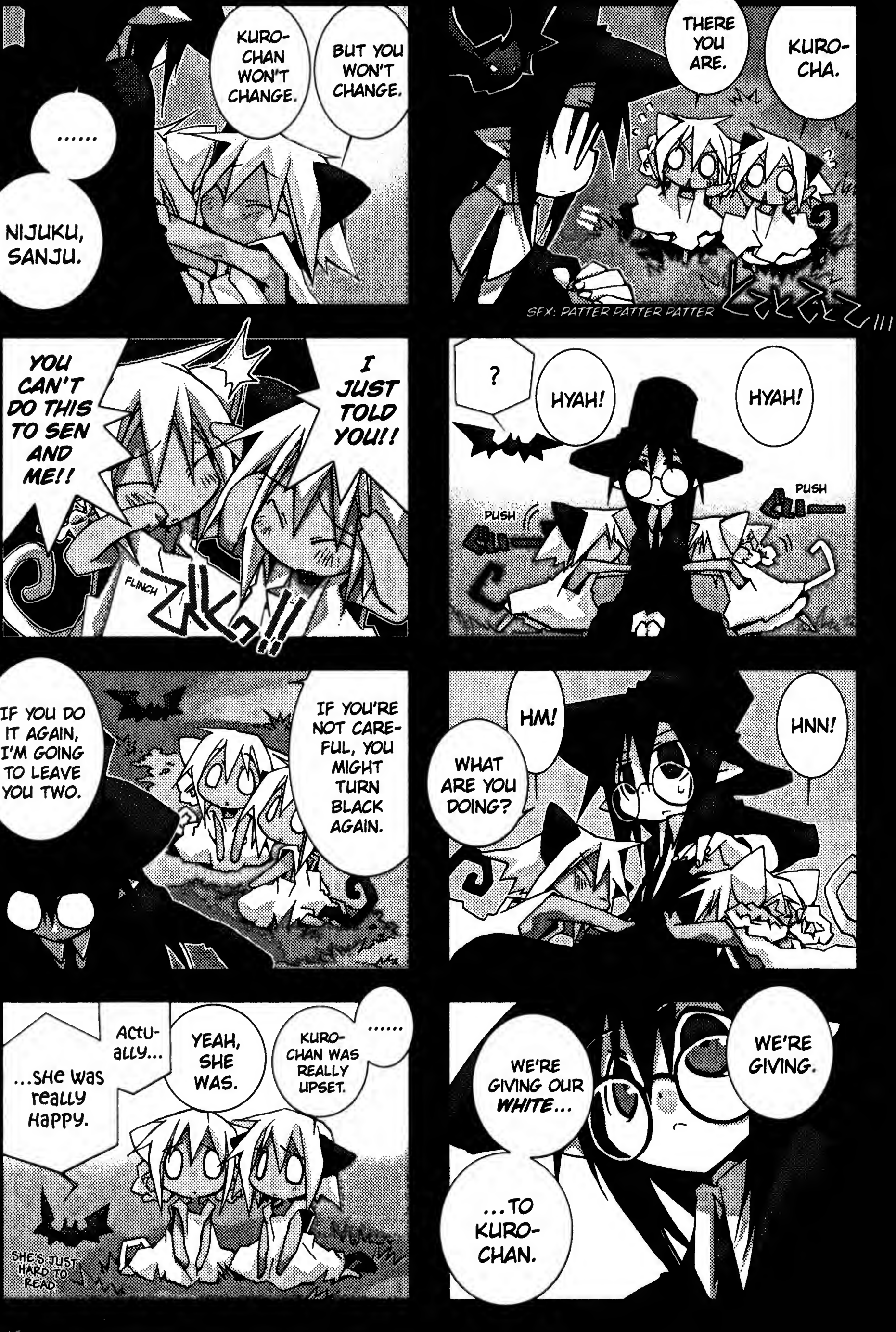

UMM...
NI-JUKU?
HEEHEE, YOU'RE RIGHT.
I GOT THE COLOR FROM THIS TREE.
"GOT THE COLOR"?
WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU'RE COVERED IN MUD.
IT'S NOT MUD.
SHE's not DIrty exactLy... it's more Like SHe was Dyed brown.
? As in camouflage?
I'LL GIVE IT BACK.
I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT THEIR PHYSICAL MAKEUP.
OH!
THese kiDs were in tHat basement aLL tHeir Lives, right?
THey ProbabLy never saw tHe sun.
So maybe tHey got sunburneD.
So tHat means...
...tHe green tHing over tHere is...
......
I was kiDDing.
PLOP
RUSTLE
EEK!

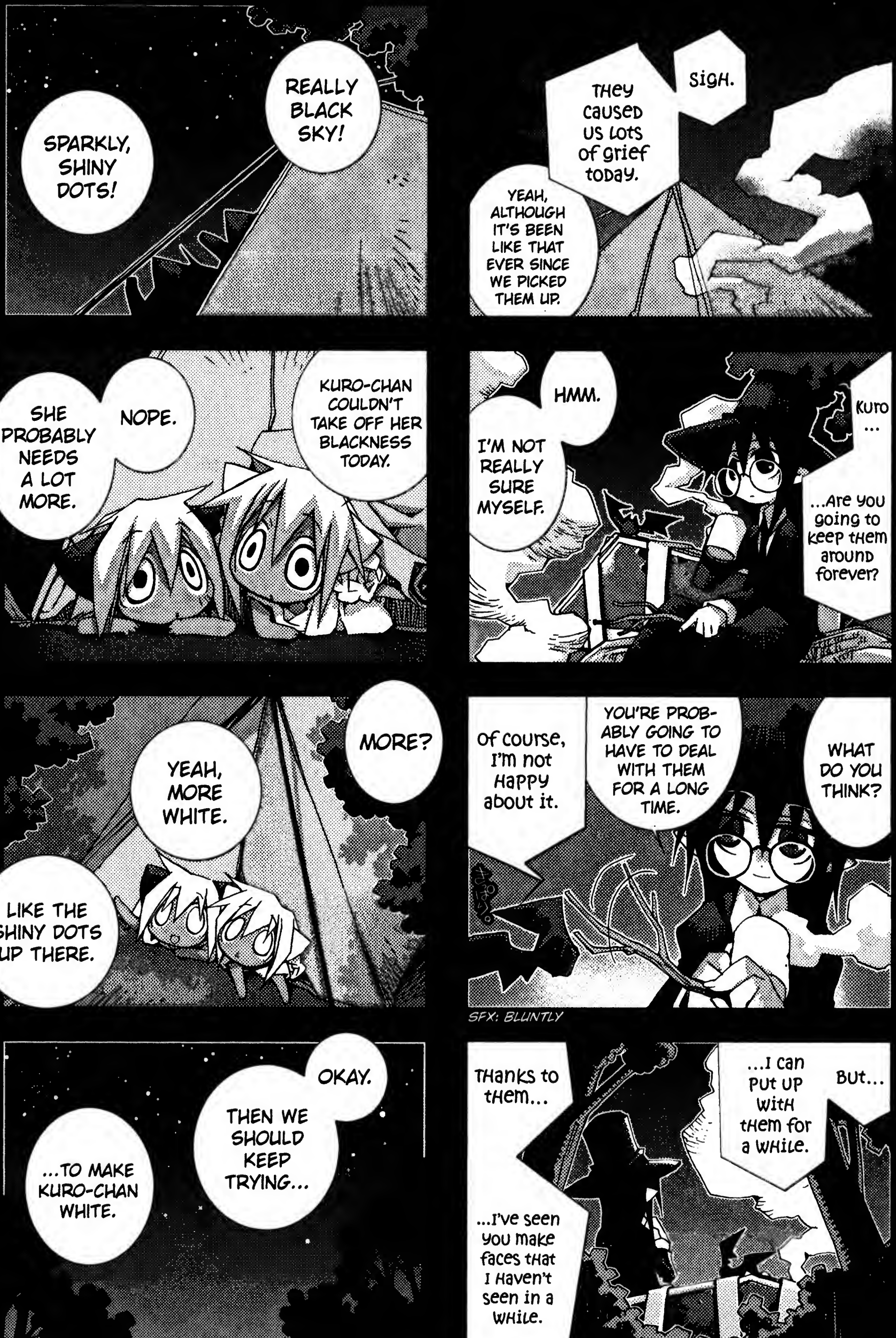

DID YOU "GET THE COLOR" FROM SOMEWHERE, TOO?
YEAH.
PLUCK
SEE?
LIKE THIS.
WHOOSH
WOW. PRETTY AMAZING.
TADA
じゃん。
......
I'VE GOT A QUESTION.
COULD YOU...
...DO THE OPPOSITE OF THAT AS WELL?
YEAH.
LIKE THIS.
PLOP
!?
GEH!!
WHAT IS THIS!?
HUH?
HEEHEE, SEN IS A WEIRD COLOR.
THE ORIGINAL COLOR WAS TOO STRONG, SO IT MIXED.
SO SEN'S A WEIRD COLOR.
DAMN.
KIDS ARE SO HONEST AND CRUEL.
PLUS, THEY'RE ADDRESSING ME SO FAMILIARLY.
IT'S OKAY, KURO.
GO AHEAD AND LAUGH IN MY FACE.
HOLDING IT IN IS BAD FOR YOU.


OKAY, I'LL GIVE MY COLOR TO KURO-CHA, TOO.
WAIT, DON'T...
GOOD. DO IT!
OH?
SEEP
HUH?
HUH?
FWOOSH
NIJU-KU!?
POOF
Whoa, she's pitch black!!

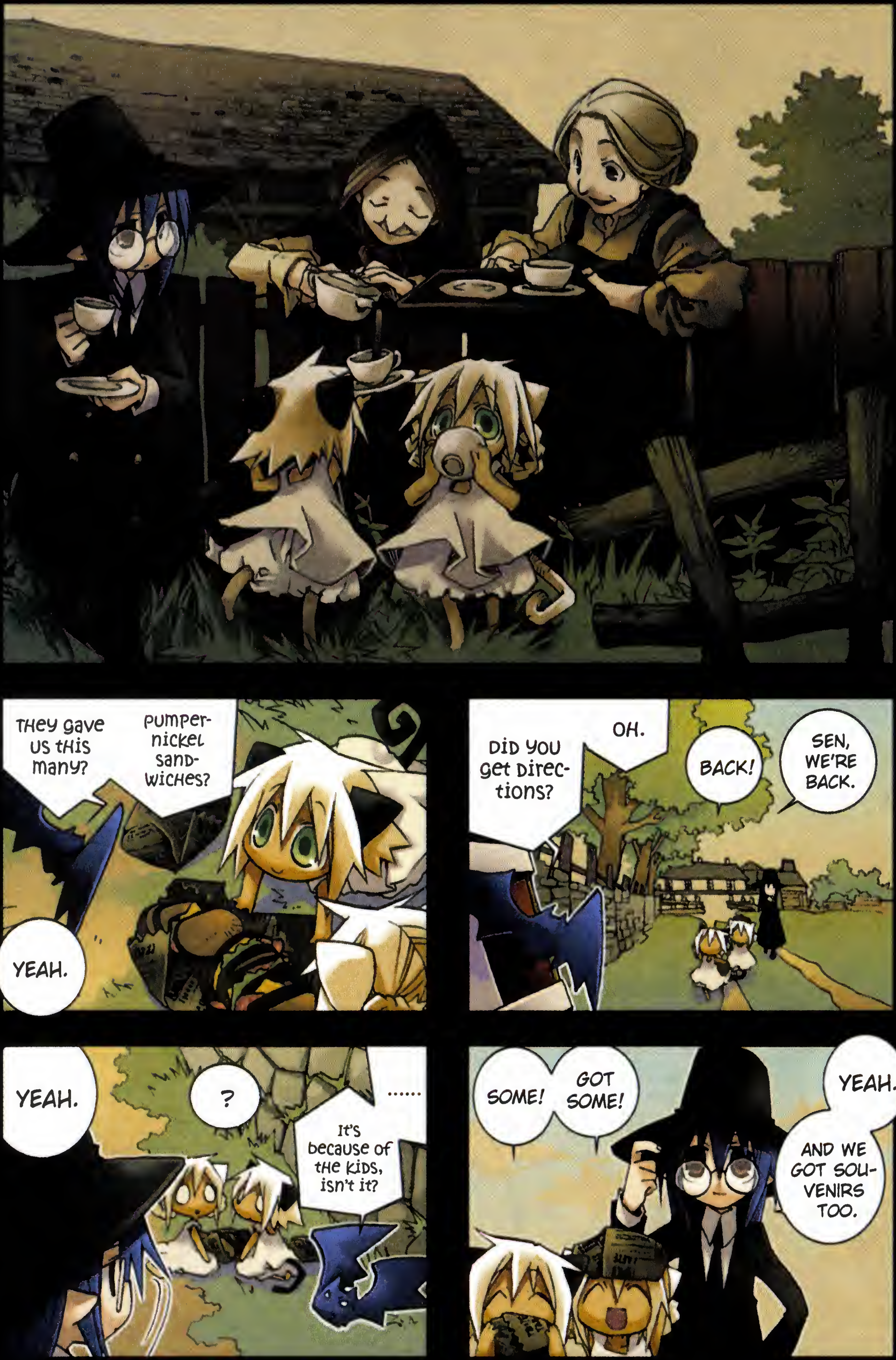

ARE YOU OKAY?
CLOSE YOUR EYES.
YEAH. BUT WHY?
I WANTED TO MAKE KURO-CHA GREEN.
BUT I TURNED BLACK.
HMM...
DRIBBLE
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M BLACK.
NO MATTER WHAT COLOR YOU MIX WITH BLACK PAINT, IT TURNS BLACK.
IT'S A COLOR THAT CAN'T BE BRIGHT LIKE YOU TWO.
THAT'S WHY YOU MUSTN'T DO THIS TO ME OR SEN AGAIN.
NOW GO WASH OFF AT THAT WELL.
......
KURO-CHAN WAS SORT OF SMILING.
WAS SHE HAPPY?
No, she's actually pretty depressed.

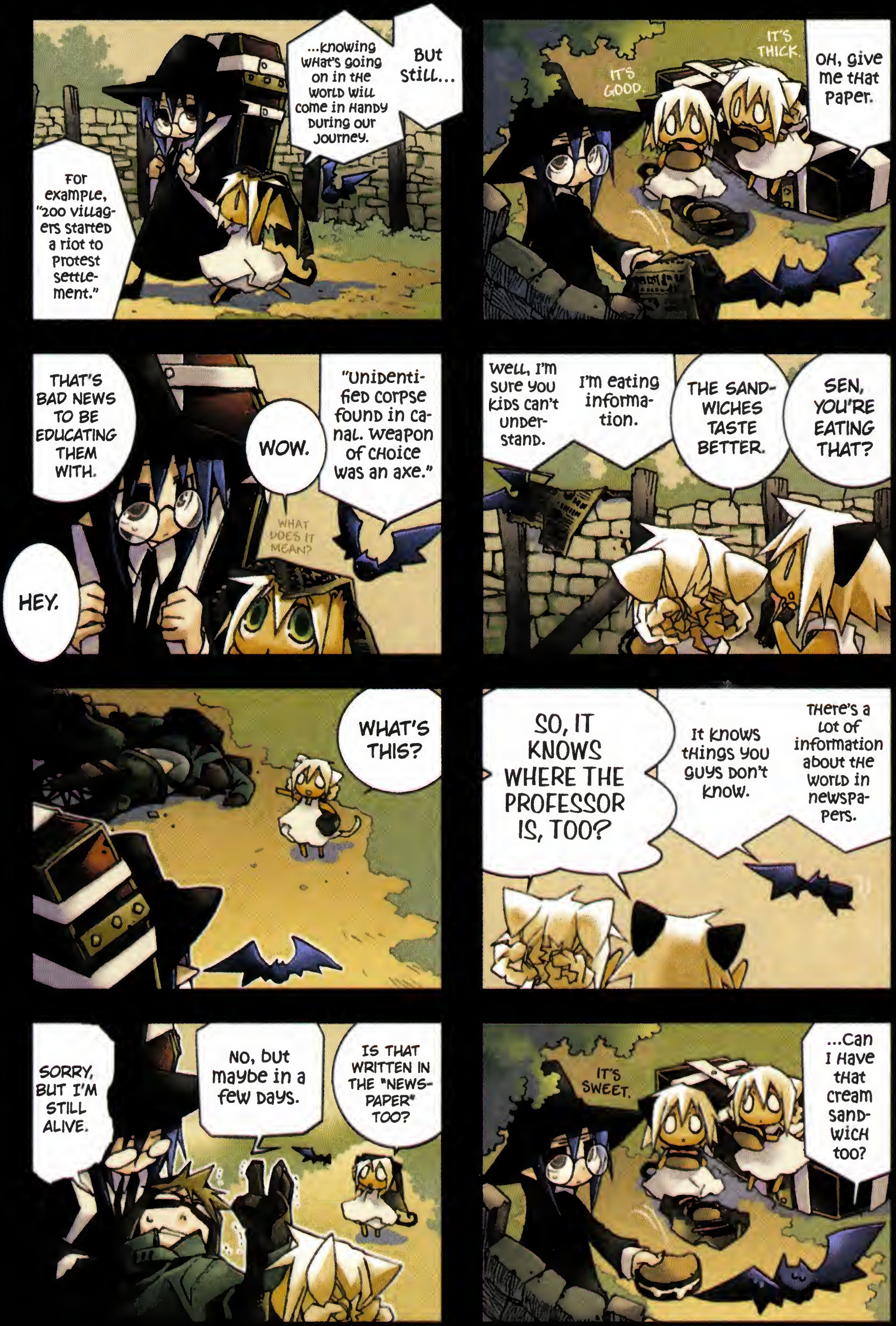
YES, THAT'S IT. I FEEL THAT THE BLACK YOU WEAR...
...WAS FORCED ON YOU AND ISN'T YOUR TRUE COLOR. IT'S LIKE SOMEONE ELSE TAINTED YOUR TRUE COLOR WITH ANOTHER SHADE.
...
You're remembering the witch we met before, HUH?
SHe was Hot.
YEAH.
BUT NOT FOR THAT REASON.
MY HANDS TURNED NIJUKU PITCH BLACK SO QUICKLY.
I FEEL DISGUSTED.
IF I STAY WITH THEM...
...I MIGHT TURN THEM BLACK AGAIN.
YeaH... well, they DID turn me into a marble color, too.
HEY, SANJU.
WHY WOULD KURO-CHA BE DEPRESSED?
UM... HMMM...
BECAUSE SHE'S BLACK?
SPLASH
IF SHE'S BLACK, SHE STAYS BLACK.
DO YOU NEED MORE WATER?
NO THANKS.
I BET...
...KURO-CHAN DOESN'T WANT TO BE BLACK.
SANJU IS WHITE.
NIJUKU IS WHITE, TOO.
ALTHOUGH YOU TURNED A BIT BLACK
.........

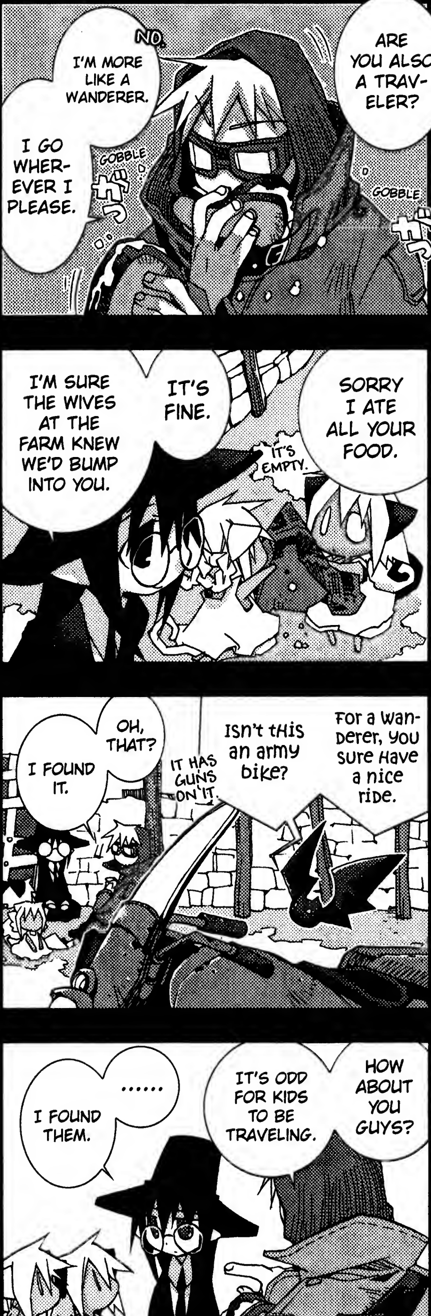

KURO-CHA.
THERE YOU ARE.
SFX: PATTER PATTER PATTER
HYAH!
HYAH!
?
PUSH
PUSH
HNN!
HM!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WE'RE GIVING.
WE'RE GIVING OUR *WHITE*...
...TO KURO-CHAN.
BUT YOU WON'T CHANGE.
KURO-CHAN WON'T CHANGE.
......
NIJUKU, SANJU.
I JUST TOLD YOU!!
YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO SEN AND ME!!
FLINCH
IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, YOU MIGHT TURN BLACK AGAIN.
IF YOU DO IT AGAIN, I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU TWO.
......
KURO-CHAN WAS REALLY UPSET.
YEAH, SHE WAS.
Actually...
...she was really happy.
SHE'S JUST HARD TO READ.

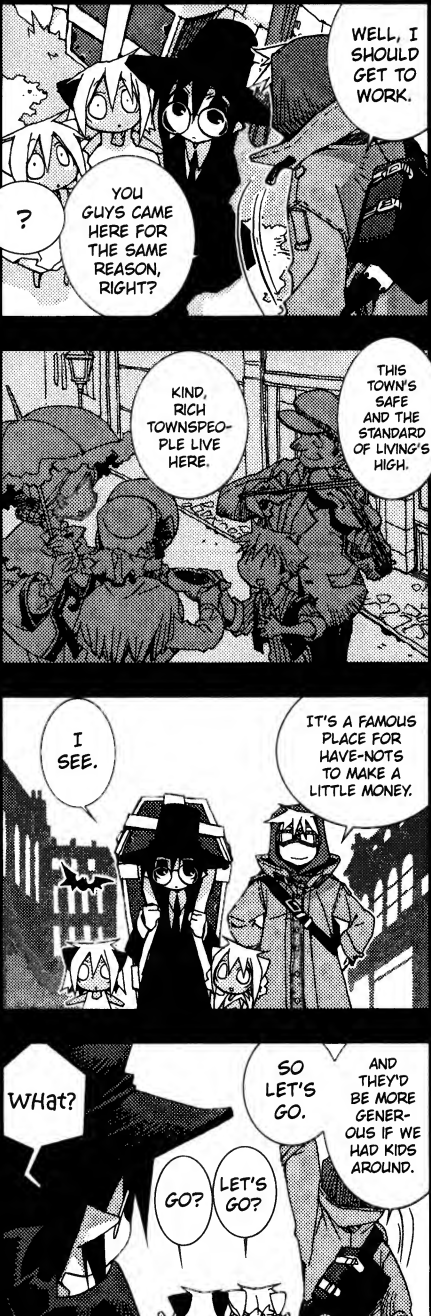

Sigh.
They caused us lots of grief today.
YEAH, ALTHOUGH IT'S BEEN LIKE THAT EVER SINCE WE PICKED THEM UP.
Kuro...
...Are you going to keep them around forever?
HMM.
I'M NOT REALLY SURE MYSELF.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
YOU'RE PROBABLY GOING TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH THEM FOR A LONG TIME.
Of course, I'm not Happy about it.
But...
...I can put up with them for a while.
Thanks to them...
...I've seen you make faces that I haven't seen in a while.
REALLY BLACK SKY!
SPARKLY, SHINY DOTS!
KURO-CHAN COULDN'T TAKE OFF HER BLACKNESS TODAY.
NOPE.
SHE PROBABLY NEEDS A LOT MORE.
MORE?
YEAH, MORE WHITE.
LIKE THE SHINY DOTS UP THERE.
OKAY.
THEN WE SHOULD KEEP TRYING...
...TO MAKE KURO-CHAN WHITE.

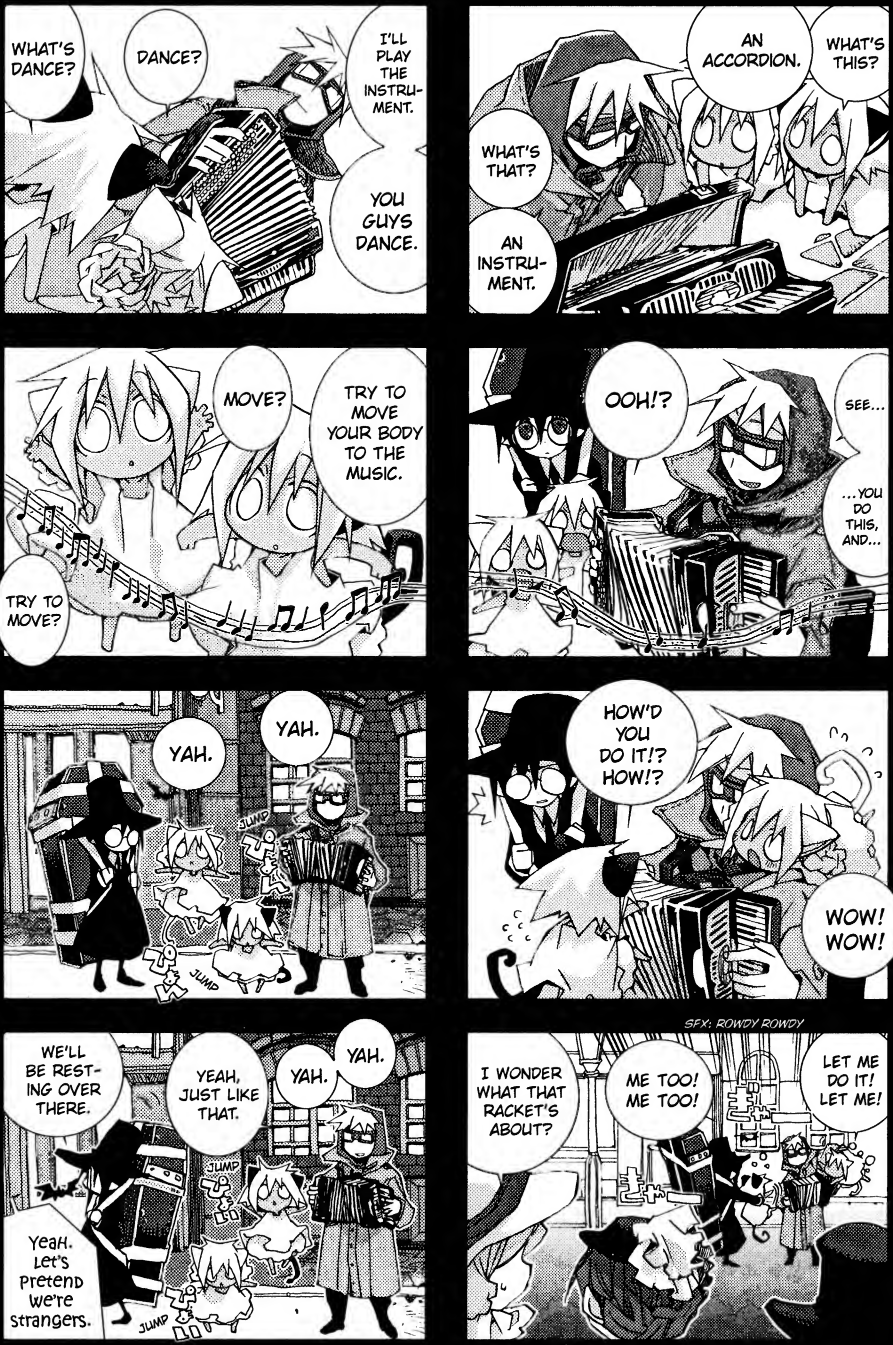
SFX: BLUNTLY

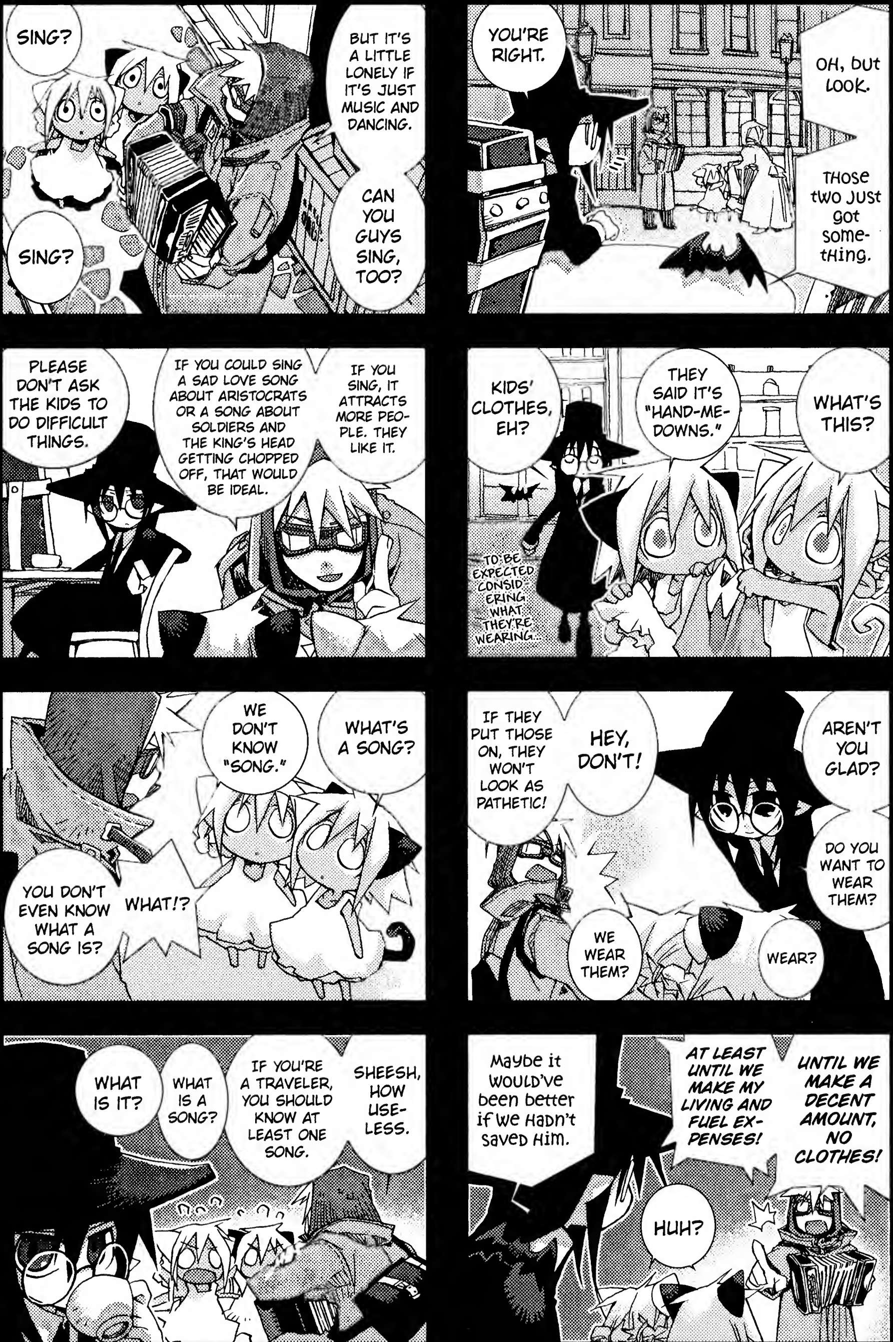

SEN, WE'RE BACK.
BACK!
OH.
Did you get directions?
Pumpernickel sandwiches?
They gave us this many?
YEAH.
YEAH.
AND WE GOT SOUVENIRS TOO.
GOT SOME!
SOME!
......
It's because of the kids, isn't it?
?
YEAH.

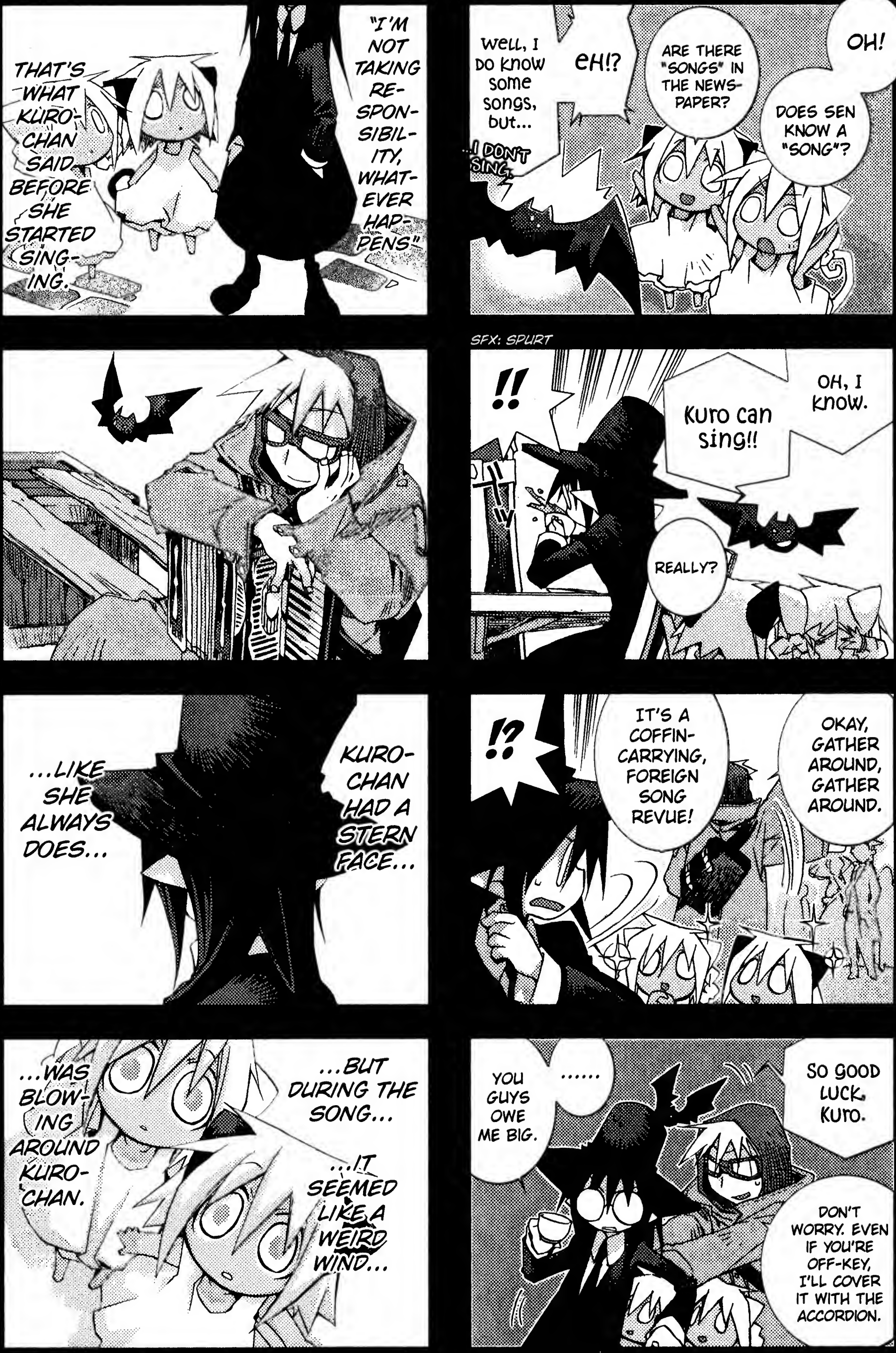

Oh, give me that paper.
It's thick.
It's good.
Sen, you're eating that?
The sandwiches taste better.
I'm eating information.
Well, I'm sure you kids can't understand.
There's a lot of information about the world in newspapers.
It knows things you guys don't know.
So, it knows where the professor is, too?
...Can I have that cream sandwich too?
It's sweet.
But still...
...knowing what's going on in the world will come in handy during our journey.
For example, "200 villagers started a riot to protest settlement."
"Unidentified corpse found in canal. Weapon of choice was an axe."
Wow.
What does it mean?
That's bad news to be educating them with.
Hey.
What's this?
Is that written in the "newspaper" too?
No, but maybe in a few days.
Sorry, but I'm still alive.

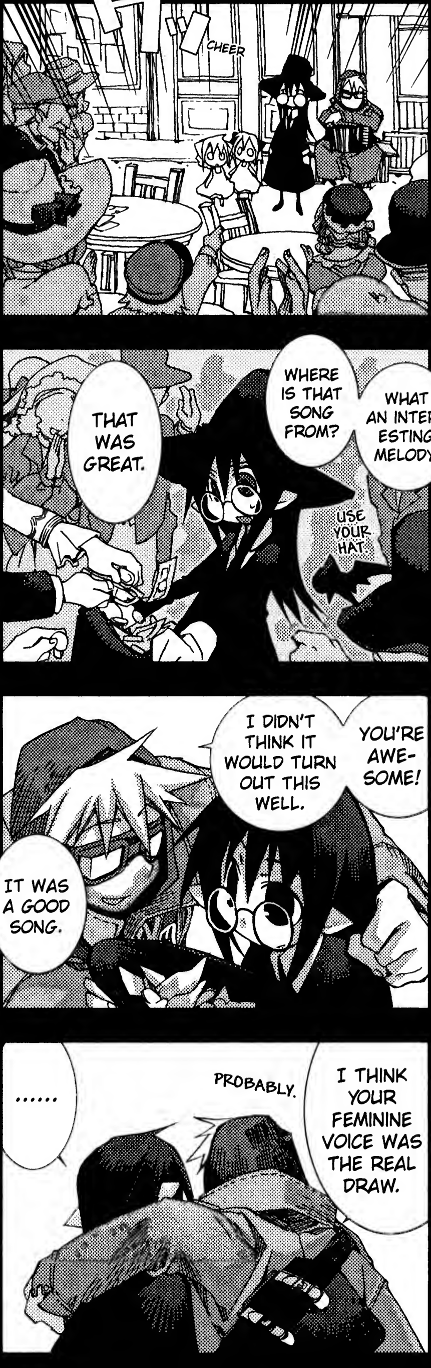

ARE YOU ALSO A TRAVELER?
NO.
I'M MORE LIKE A WANDERER.
I GO WHEREVER I PLEASE.
GOBBLE
ガツ
GOBBLE
ガツ
SORRY I ATE ALL YOUR FOOD.
IT'S EMPTY.
IT'S FINE.
I'M SURE THE WIVES AT THE FARM KNEW WE'D BUMP INTO YOU.
For a wanderer, you sure Have a nice ride.
Isn't tHis an army bike?
IT HAS GUNS ON IT.
OH, THAT?
I FOUND IT.
HOW ABOUT YOU GUYS?
IT'S ODD FOR KIDS TO BE TRAVELING.
......
I FOUND THEM.

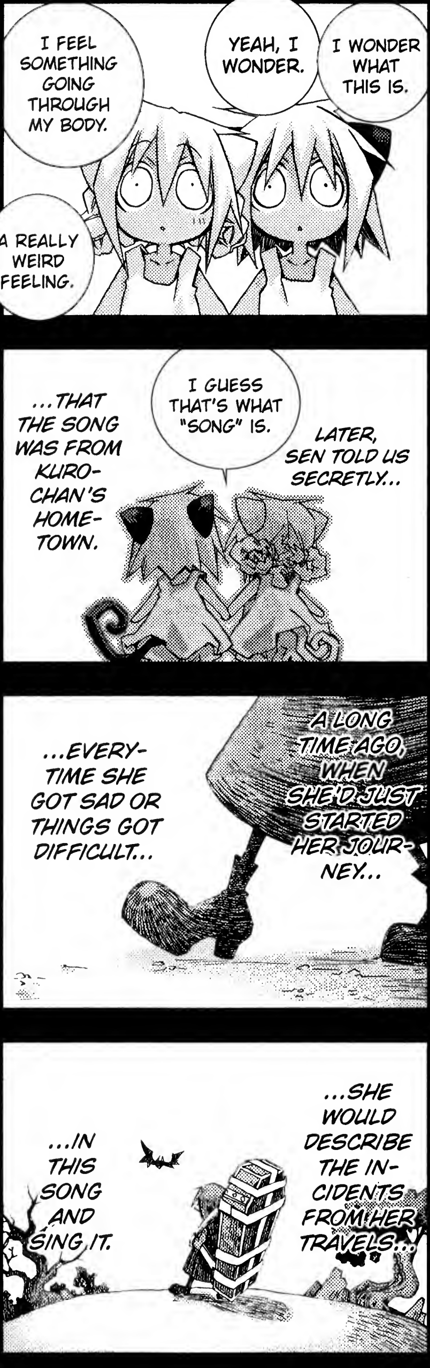

WELL, I SHOULD GET TO WORK.
YOU GUYS CAME HERE FOR THE SAME REASON, RIGHT?
?
THIS TOWN'S SAFE AND THE STANDARD OF LIVING'S HIGH.
KIND, RICH TOWNSPEOPLE LIVE HERE.
IT'S A FAMOUS PLACE FOR HAVE-NOTS TO MAKE A LITTLE MONEY.
I SEE.
AND THEY'D BE MORE GENEROUS IF WE HAD KIDS AROUND.
SO LET'S GO.
LET'S GO?
GO?
WHAT?

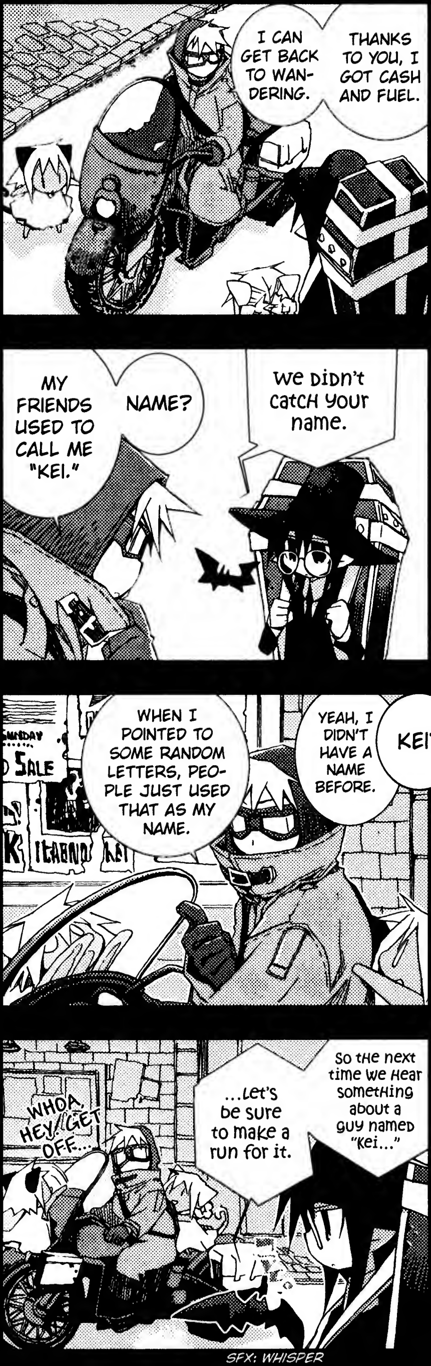

WHAT'S THIS?
AN ACCORDION.
WHAT'S THAT?
AN INSTRUMENT.
SEE...
...YOU DO THIS, AND...
OOH!?
HOW'D YOU DO IT!? HOW!?
WOW! WOW!
SFX: ROWDY ROWDY
LET ME DO IT! LET ME!
ME TOO! ME TOO!
I WONDER WHAT THAT RACKET'S ABOUT?
I'LL PLAY THE INSTRUMENT.
YOU GUYS DANCE.
DANCE?
WHAT'S DANCE?
TRY TO MOVE YOUR BODY TO THE MUSIC.
MOVE?
TRY TO MOVE?
YAH.
YAH.
JUMP
JUMP
YAH.
YAH.
YEAH, JUST LIKE THAT.
WE'LL BE RESTING OVER THERE.
Yeah. Let's pretend we're strangers.
JUMP
JUMP

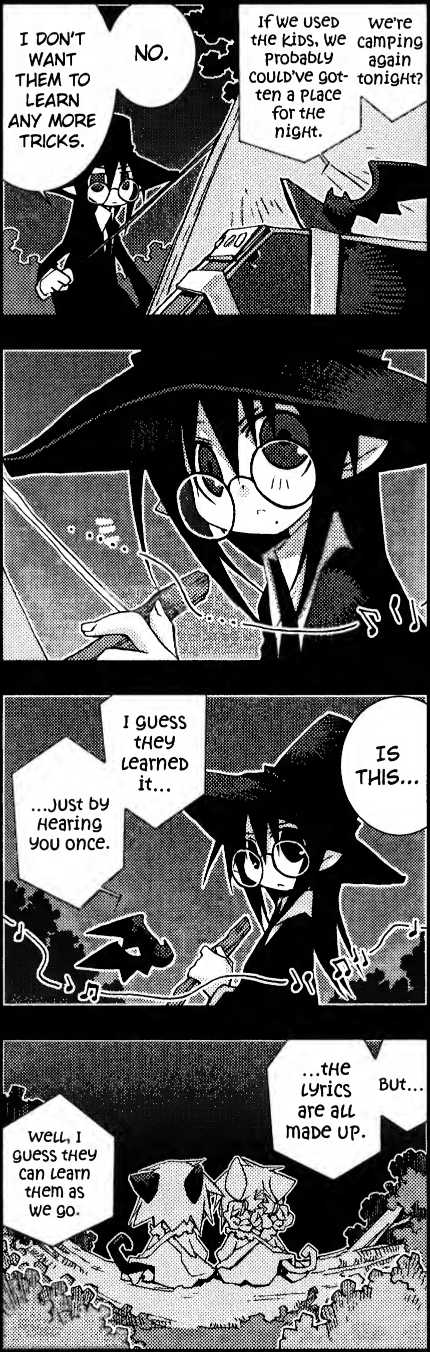

YOU'RE RIGHT.
Oh, but look.
Those two just got something.
WHAT'S THIS?
THEY SAID IT'S "HAND-ME-DOWNS."
KIDS' CLOTHES, EH?
TO BE EXPECTED CONSIDERING WHAT THEY'RE WEARING...
AREN'T YOU GLAD?
DO YOU WANT TO WEAR THEM?
WEAR?
WE WEAR THEM?
HEY, DON'T!
IF THEY PUT THOSE ON, THEY WON'T LOOK AS PATHETIC!
UNTIL WE MAKE A DECENT AMOUNT, NO CLOTHES!
AT LEAST UNTIL WE MAKE MY LIVING AND FUEL EXPENSES!
HUH?
Maybe it would've been better if we hadn't saved him.
BUT IT'S A LITTLE LONELY IF IT'S JUST MUSIC AND DANCING.
CAN YOU GUYS SING, TOO?
SING?
SING?
IF YOU SING, IT ATTRACTS MORE PEOPLE. THEY LIKE IT.
IF YOU COULD SING A SAD LOVE SONG ABOUT ARISTOCRATS OR A SONG ABOUT SOLDIERS AND THE KING'S HEAD GETTING CHOPPED OFF, THAT WOULD BE IDEAL.
PLEASE DON'T ASK THE KIDS TO DO DIFFICULT THINGS.
WHAT'S A SONG?
WE DON'T KNOW "SONG."
WHAT!?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT A SONG IS?
SHEESH, HOW USELESS.
IF YOU'RE A TRAVELER, YOU SHOULD KNOW AT LEAST ONE SONG.
WHAT IS A SONG?
WHAT IS IT?

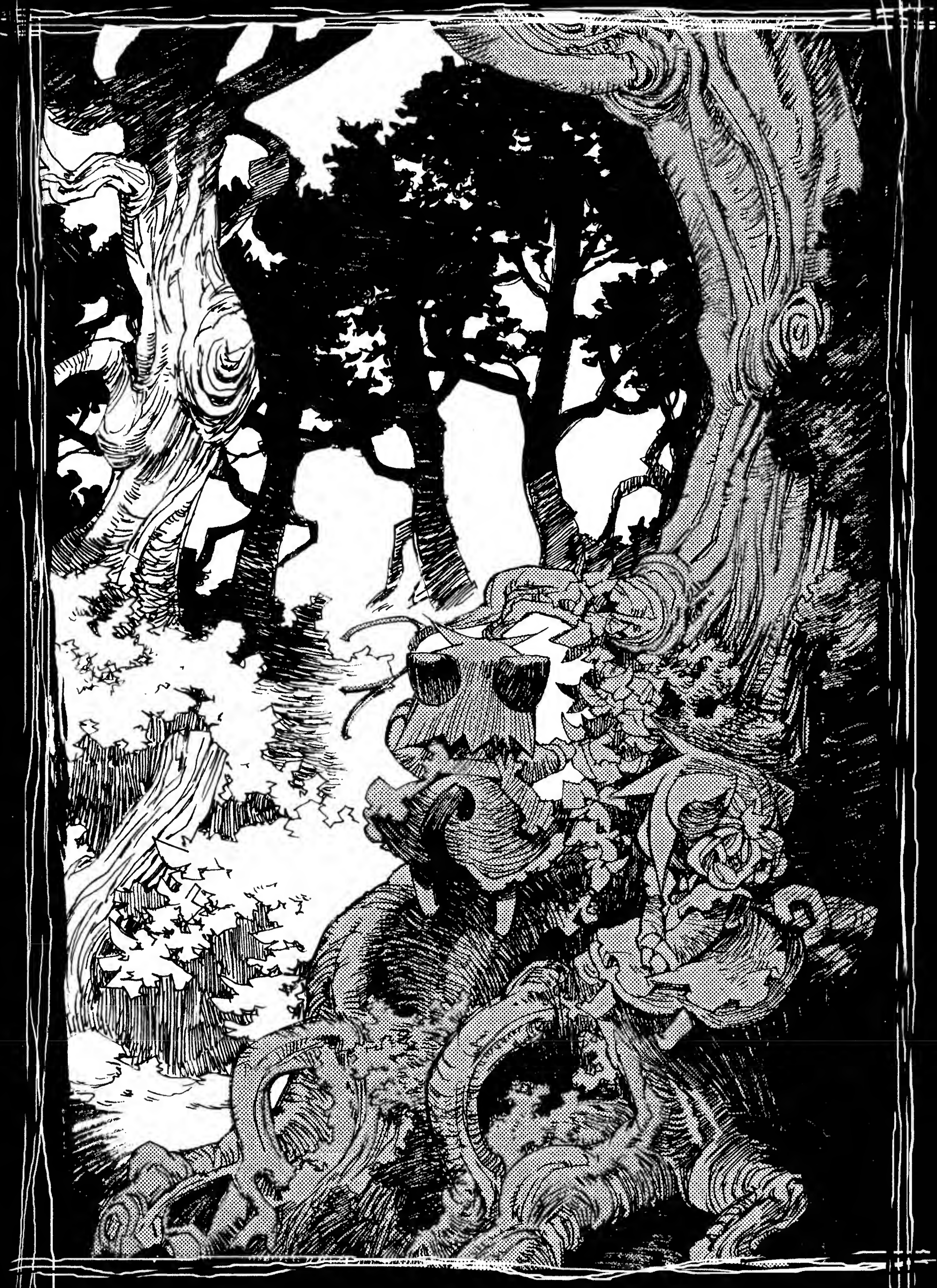

OH!
DOES SEN KNOW A "SONG"?
ARE THERE "SONGS" IN THE NEWSPAPER?
EH!?
Well, I do know some songs, but...
...I DON'T SING.
SFX: SPURT
OH, I know.
Kuro can sing!!
!!
REALLY?
OKAY, GATHER AROUND, GATHER AROUND.
IT'S A COFFIN-CARRYING, FOREIGN SONG REVUE!
!?
So good luck, Kuro.
DON'T WORRY. EVEN IF YOU'RE OFF-KEY, I'LL COVER IT WITH THE ACCORDION.
......
YOU GUYS OWE ME BIG.
"I'M NOT TAKING RESPONSIBILITY, WHATEVER HAPPENS"
THAT'S WHAT KURO-CHAN SAID BEFORE SHE STARTED SINGING.
KURO-CHAN HAD A STERN FACE...
...LIKE SHE ALWAYS DOES...
...BUT DURING THE SONG...
...IT SEEMED LIKE A WEIRD WIND...
...WAS BLOWING AROUND KURO-CHAN.


CHEER
WHAT AN INTERESTING MELODY.
WHERE IS THAT SONG FROM?
THAT WAS GREAT.
USE YOUR HAT.
YOU'RE AWESOME!
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD TURN OUT THIS WELL.
IT WAS A GOOD SONG.
I THINK YOUR FEMININE VOICE WAS THE REAL DRAW.
PROBABLY.
......


I WONDER WHAT THIS IS.
YEAH, I WONDER.
I FEEL SOMETHING GOING THROUGH MY BODY.
A REALLY WEIRD FEELING.
LATER, SEN TOLD US SECRETLY...
I GUESS THAT'S WHAT "SONG" IS.
...THAT THE SONG WAS FROM KURO-CHAN'S HOMETOWN.
A LONG TIME AGO, WHEN SHE'D JUST STARTED HER JOURNEY...
...EVERYTIME SHE GOT SAD OR THINGS GOT DIFFICULT...
...SHE WOULD DESCRIBE THE INCIDENTS FROM HER TRAVELS...
...IN THIS SONG AND SING IT.

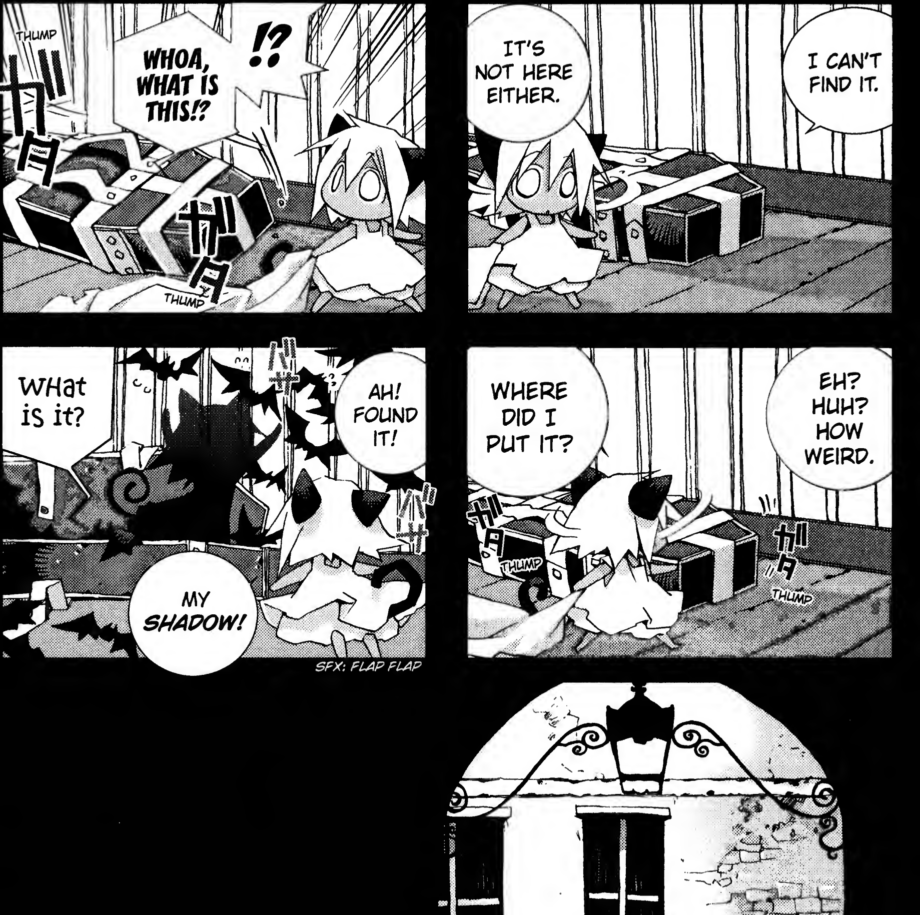

THANKS TO YOU, I GOT CASH AND FUEL.
I CAN GET BACK TO WANDERING.
We didn't catch your name.
NAME?
MY FRIENDS USED TO CALL ME "KEI."
KEI?
YEAH, I DIDN'T HAVE A NAME BEFORE.
WHEN I POINTED TO SOME RANDOM LETTERS, PEOPLE JUST USED THAT AS MY NAME.
SUNDAY
SALE
KEI
So the next time we hear something about a guy named "Kei..."
...let's be sure to make a run for it.
WHOA, HEY! GET OFF...
SFX: WHISPER

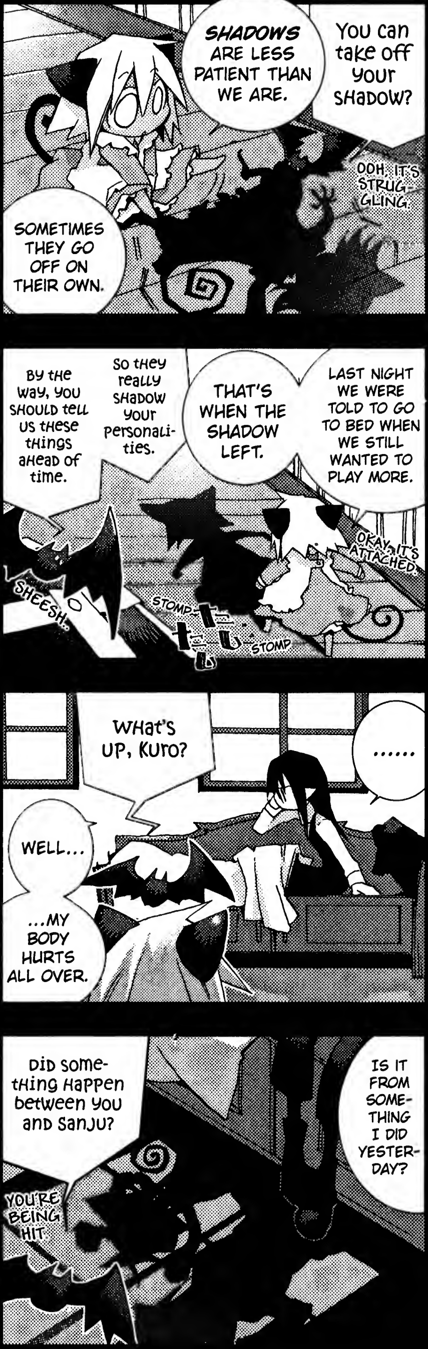

We're camping again tonight?
If we used the kids, we probably could've gotten a place for the night.
NO.
I DON'T WANT THEM TO LEARN ANY MORE TRICKS.
IS THIS...
I guess they learned it...
...just by hearing you once.
But...
...the lyrics are all made up.
Well, I guess they can learn them as we go.

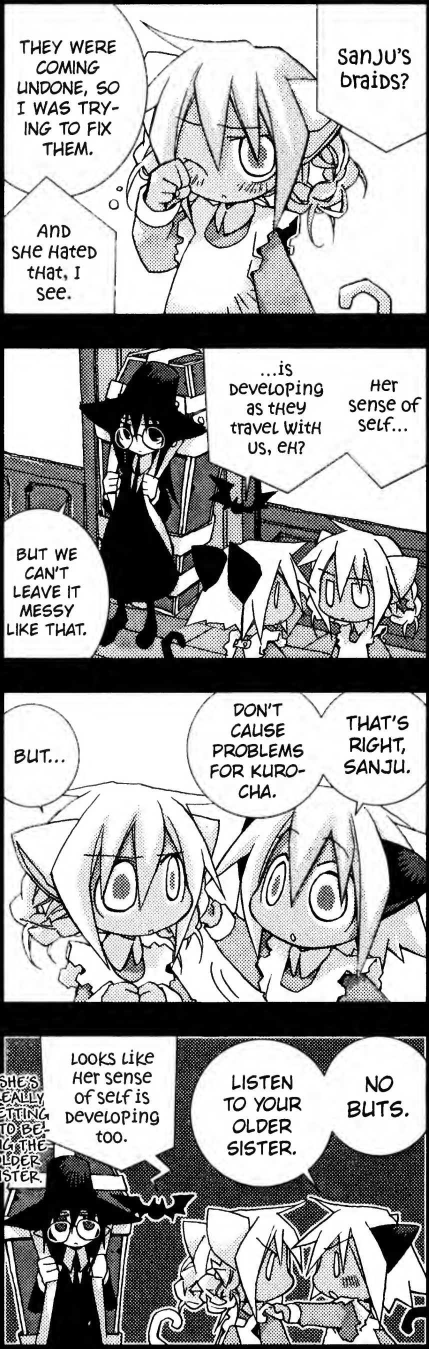


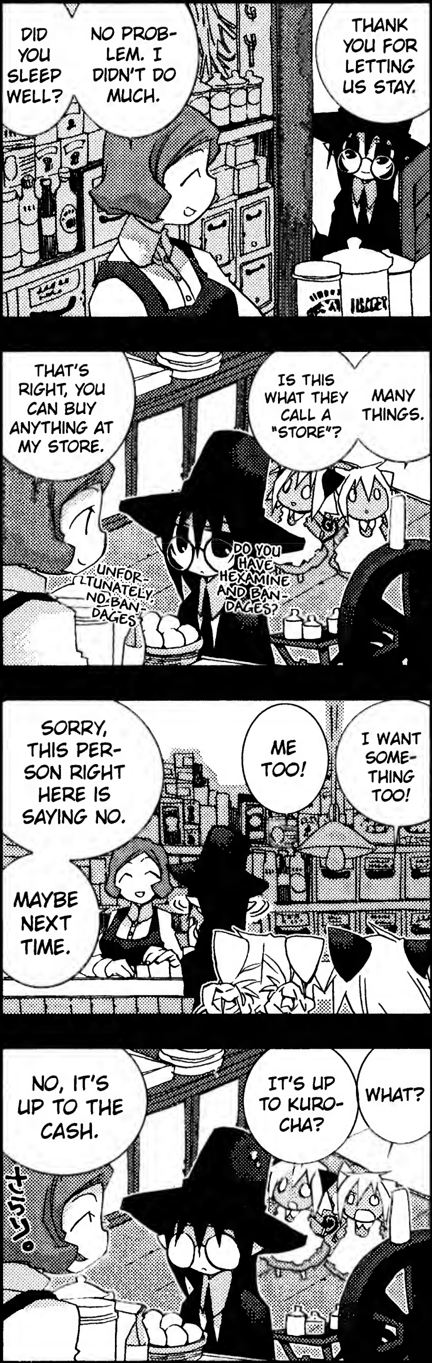
*The traveler looked on them from afar and said this:*

*"But I probably can't do more for them than the Professor can do now."*

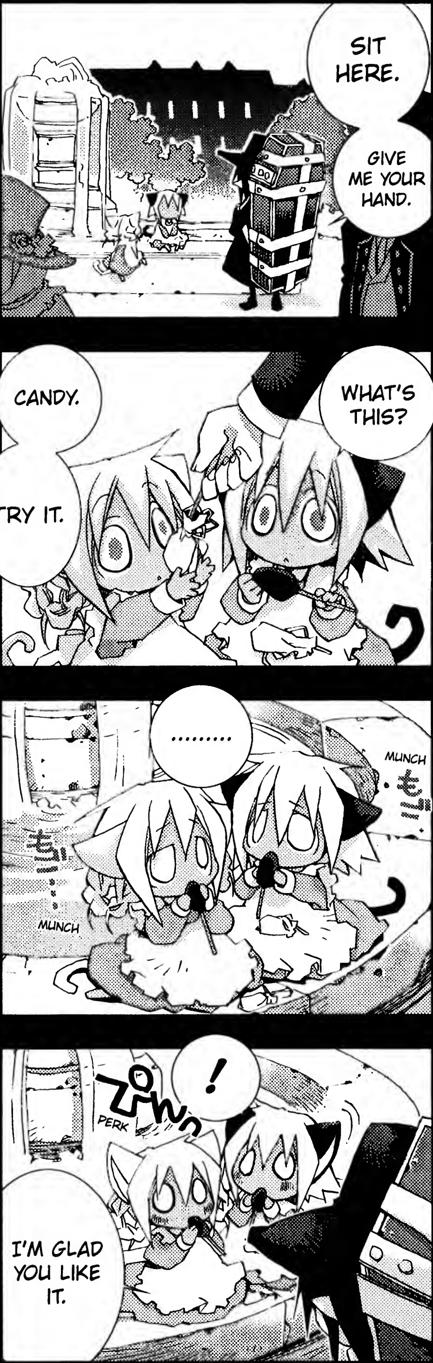

I CAN'T FIND IT.
IT'S NOT HERE EITHER.
!?
WHOA, WHAT IS THIS!?
ガタ
THUMP
ガタ
THUMP
EH? HUH? HOW WEIRD.
WHERE DID I PUT IT?
ガタ
THUMP
ガタ
THUMP
AH! FOUND IT!
バサ
バサ
What is it?
MY SHADOW!
SFX: FLAP FLAP

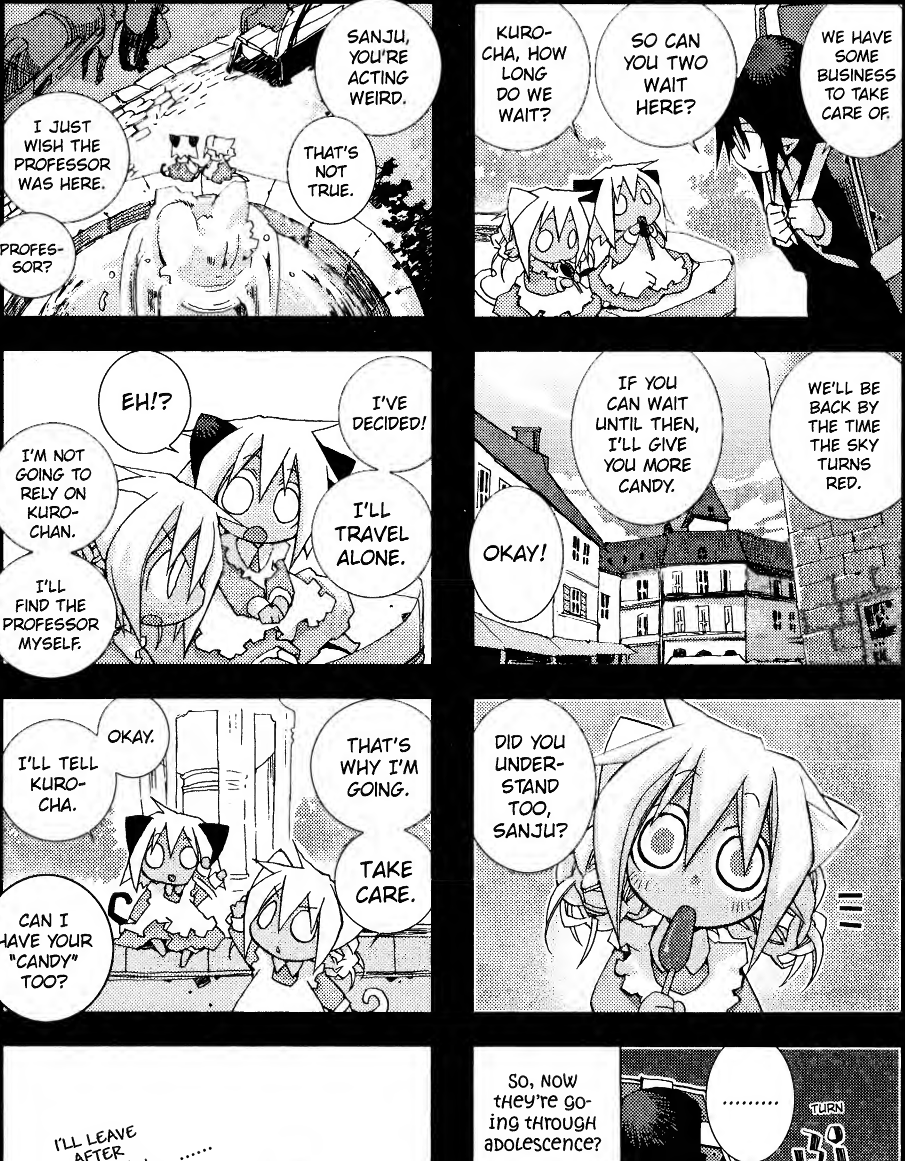

You can take off your shadow?
SHADOWS ARE LESS PATIENT THAN WE ARE.
OOH, IT'S STRUGGLING.
SOMETIMES THEY GO OFF ON THEIR OWN.
LAST NIGHT WE WERE TOLD TO GO TO BED WHEN WE STILL WANTED TO PLAY MORE.
THAT'S WHEN THE SHADOW LEFT.
So they really shadow your personalities.
By the way, you should tell us these things ahead of time.
OKAY, IT'S ATTACHED.
STOMP STOMP
SHEESH.
......
What's up, Kuro?
WELL...
...MY BODY HURTS ALL OVER.
IS IT FROM SOMETHING I DID YESTERDAY?
Did something happen between you and Sanju?
YOU'RE BEING HIT.

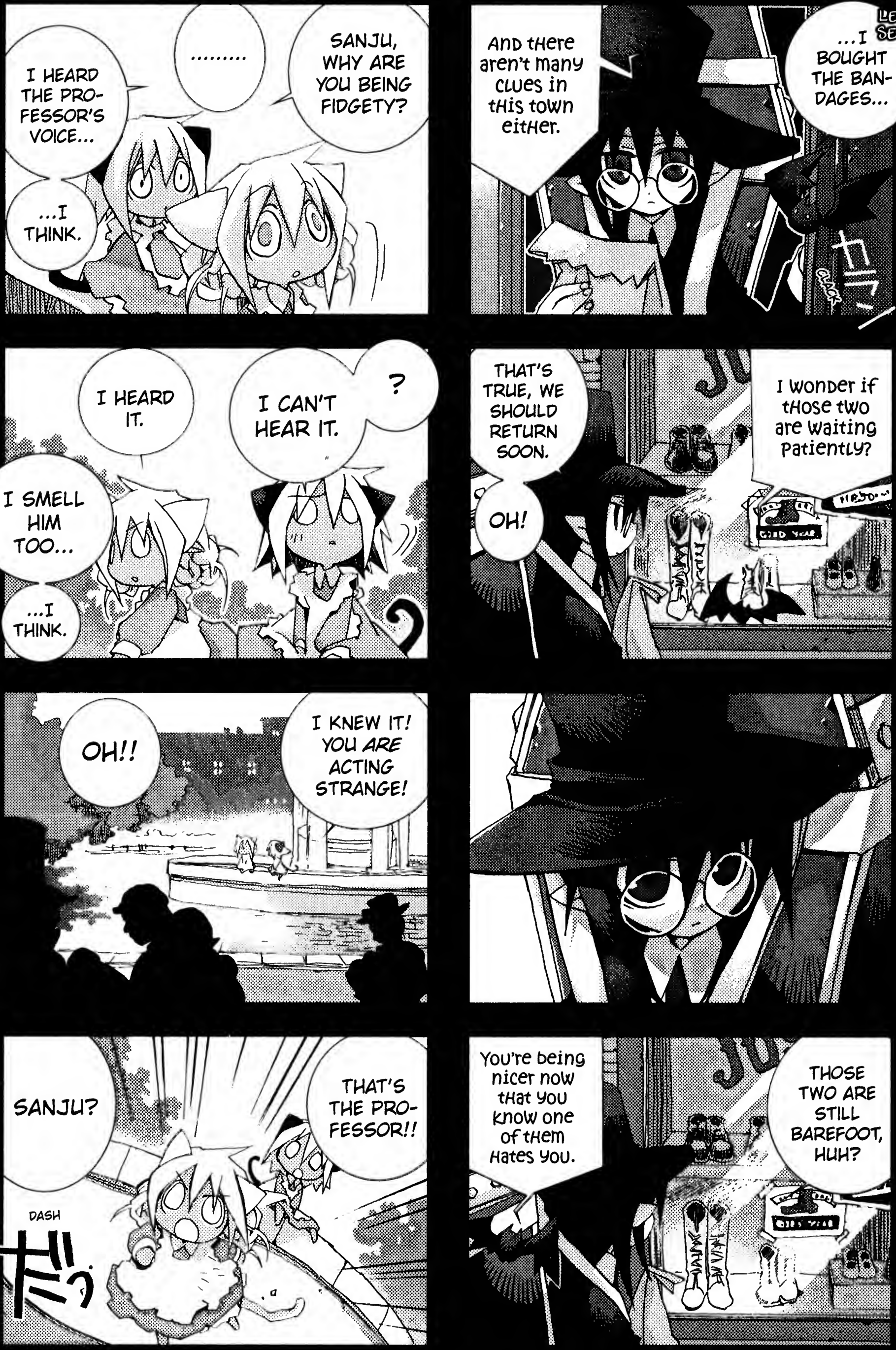

Sanju's braids?
THEY WERE COMING UNDONE, SO I WAS TRYING TO FIX THEM.
And she hated that, I see.
Her sense of self...
...is developing as they travel with us, eh?
BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE IT MESSY LIKE THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT, SANJU.
DON'T CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR KURO-CHA.
BUT...
NO BUTS.
LISTEN TO YOUR OLDER SISTER.
Looks like her sense of self is developing too.
SHE'S REALLY GETTING INTO BEING THE OLDER SISTER.

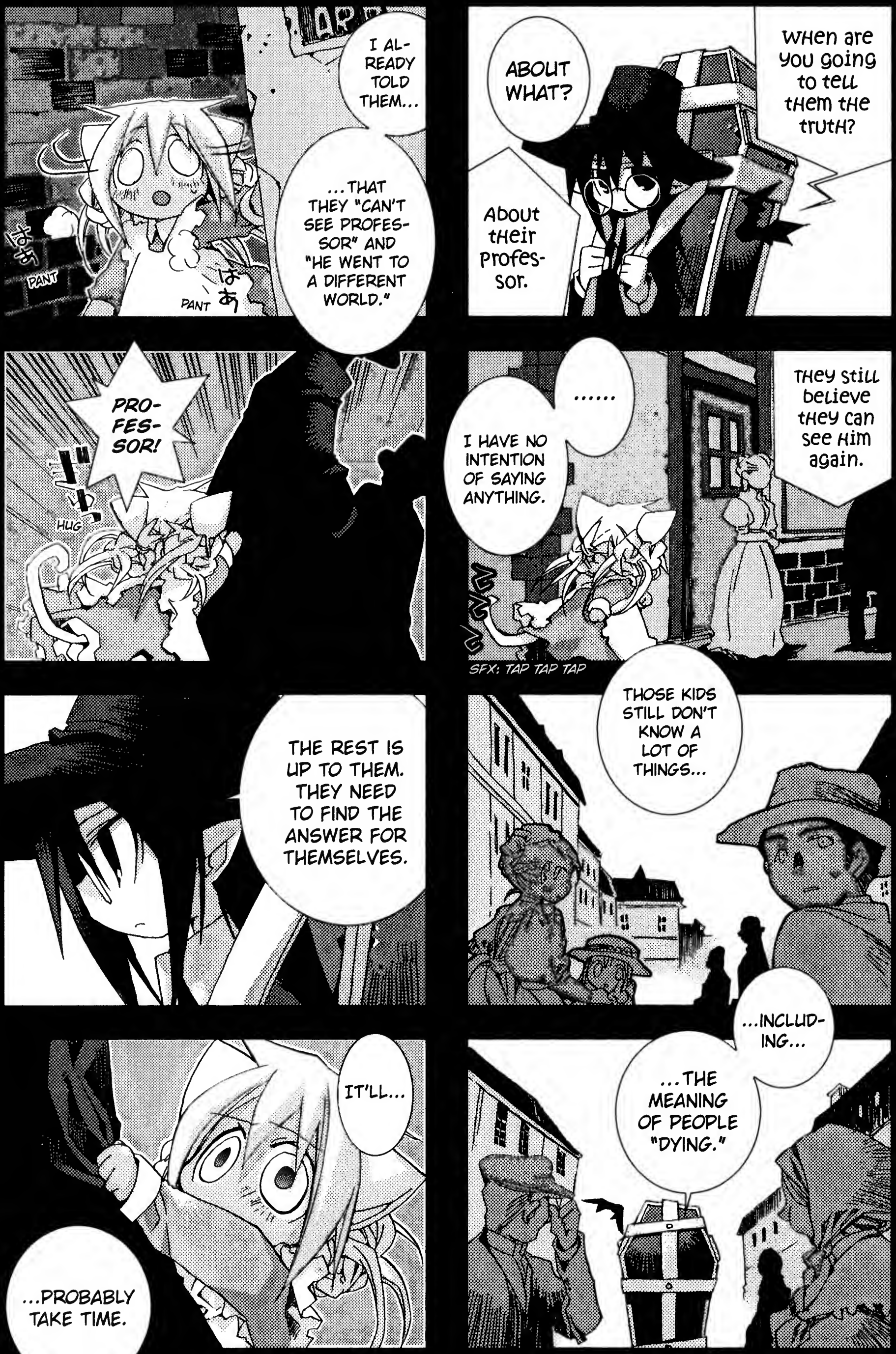

THANK YOU FOR LETTING US STAY.
NO PROBLEM. I DIDN'T DO MUCH.
DID YOU SLEEP WELL?
MANY THINGS.
IS THIS WHAT THEY CALL A "STORE"?
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU CAN BUY ANYTHING AT MY STORE.
DO YOU HAVE HEXAMINE AND BANDAGES?
UNFORTUNATELY, NO BANDAGES.
I WANT SOMETHING TOO!
ME TOO!
SORRY, THIS PERSON RIGHT HERE IS SAYING NO.
MAYBE NEXT TIME.
WHAT?
IT'S UP TO KUROCHA?
NO, IT'S UP TO THE CASH.

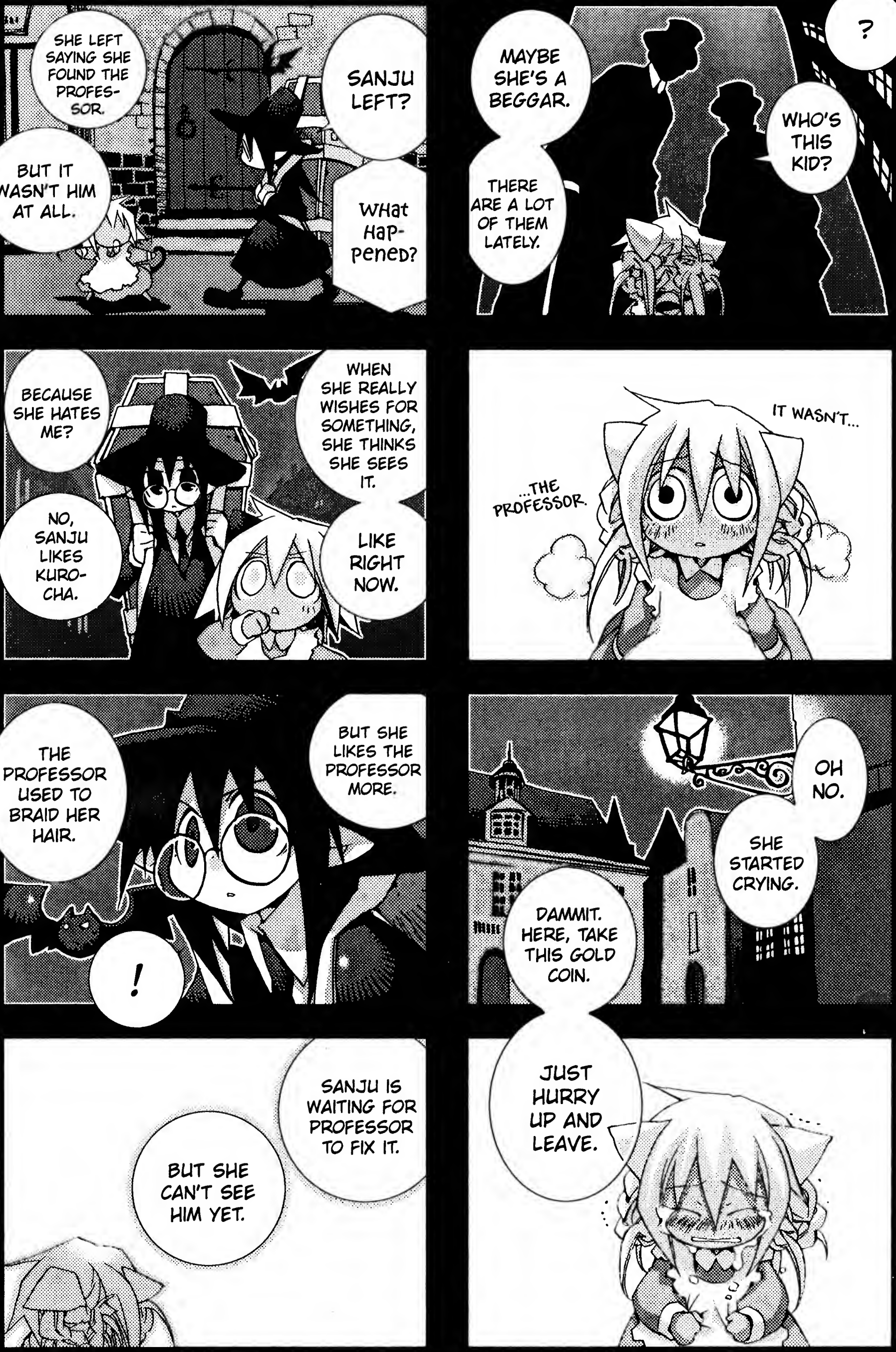
SFX: BLUNTLY

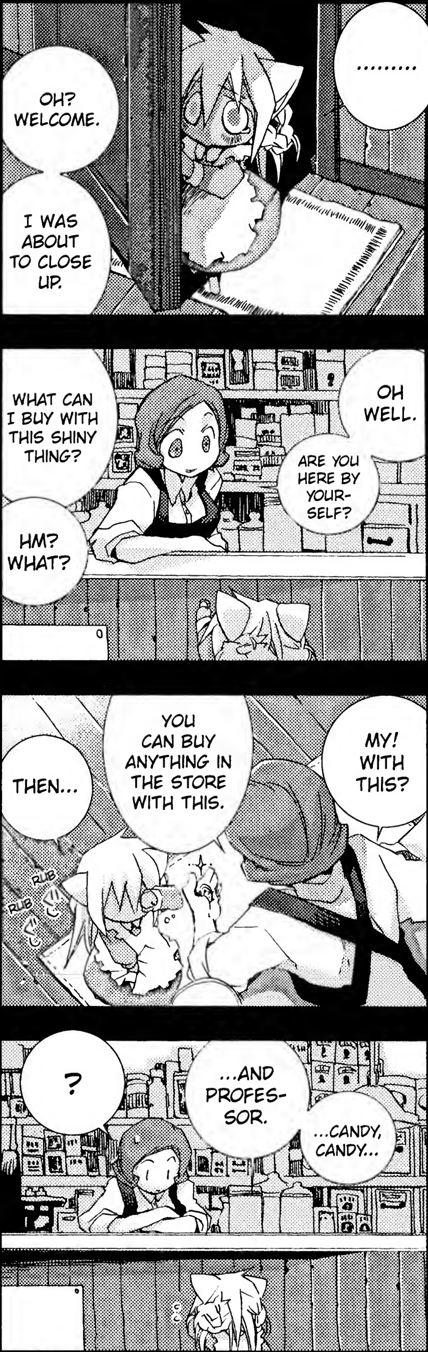

SIT HERE.
GIVE ME YOUR HAND.
WHAT'S THIS?
CANDY.
TRY IT.
.........
MUNCH
MUNCH
!
PERK
I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT.

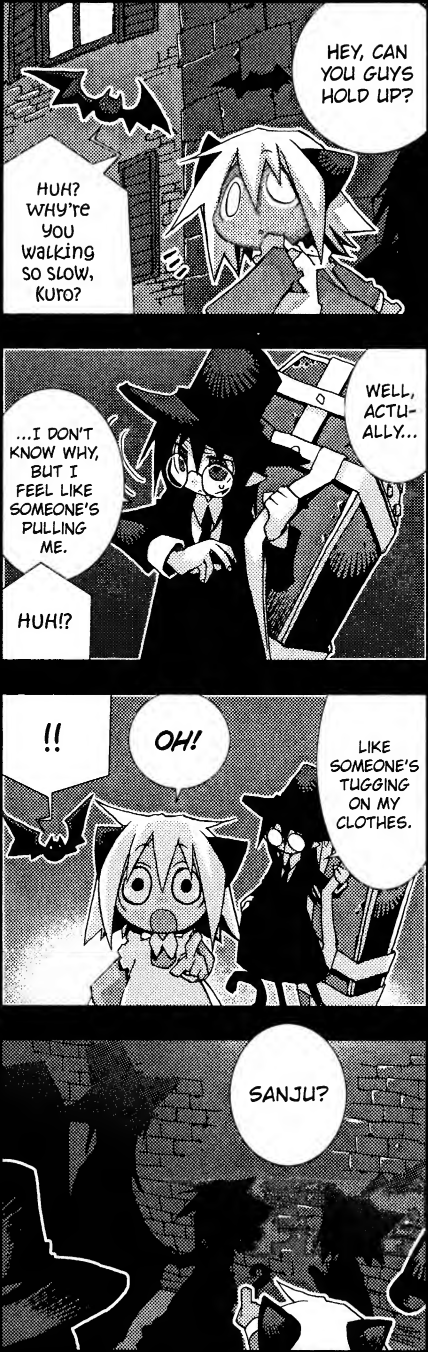

WE HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF.
SO CAN YOU TWO WAIT HERE?
KURO-CHA, HOW LONG DO WE WAIT?
WE'LL BE BACK BY THE TIME THE SKY TURNS RED.
IF YOU CAN WAIT UNTIL THEN, I'LL GIVE YOU MORE CANDY.
OKAY!
DID YOU UNDERSTAND TOO, SANJU?
.........
TURN
So, now they're going through adolescence?
SANJU, YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
I JUST WISH THE PROFESSOR WAS HERE.
PROFESSOR?
I'VE DECIDED!
I'LL TRAVEL ALONE.
EH!?
I'M NOT GOING TO RELY ON KURO-CHAN.
I'LL FIND THE PROFESSOR MYSELF.
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING.
TAKE CARE.
OKAY.
I'LL TELL KURO-CHA.
CAN I HAVE YOUR "CANDY" TOO?
......
I'LL LEAVE AFTER KURO-CHAN COMES BACK.

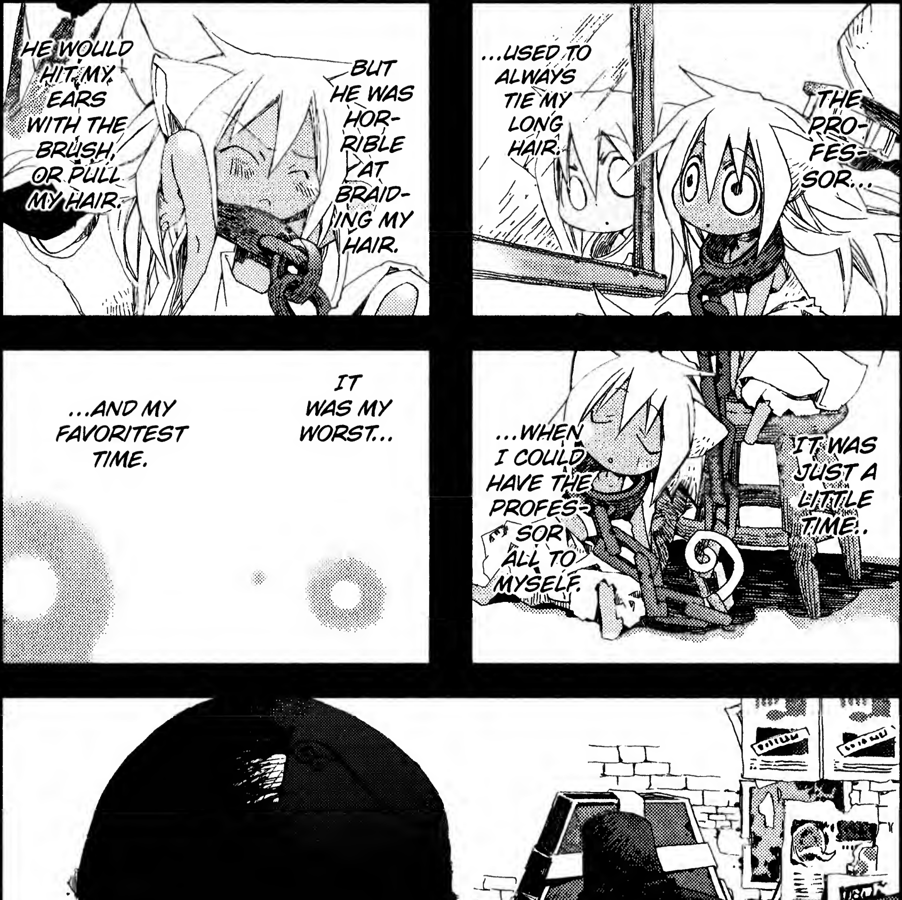

LET'S SEE...
...I BOUGHT THE BANDAGES...
And there aren't many clues in this town either.
CLACK
I wonder if those two are waiting patiently?
THAT'S TRUE, WE SHOULD RETURN SOON.
OH!
THOSE TWO ARE STILL BAREFOOT, HUH?
You're being nicer now that you know one of them hates you.
SANJU, WHY ARE YOU BEING FIDGETY?
.........
I HEARD THE PROFESSOR'S VOICE...
...I THINK.
?
I CAN'T HEAR IT.
I HEARD IT.
I SMELL HIM TOO...
...I THINK.
I KNEW IT! YOU ARE ACTING STRANGE!
OH!!
THAT'S THE PROFESSOR!!
SANJU?
DASH

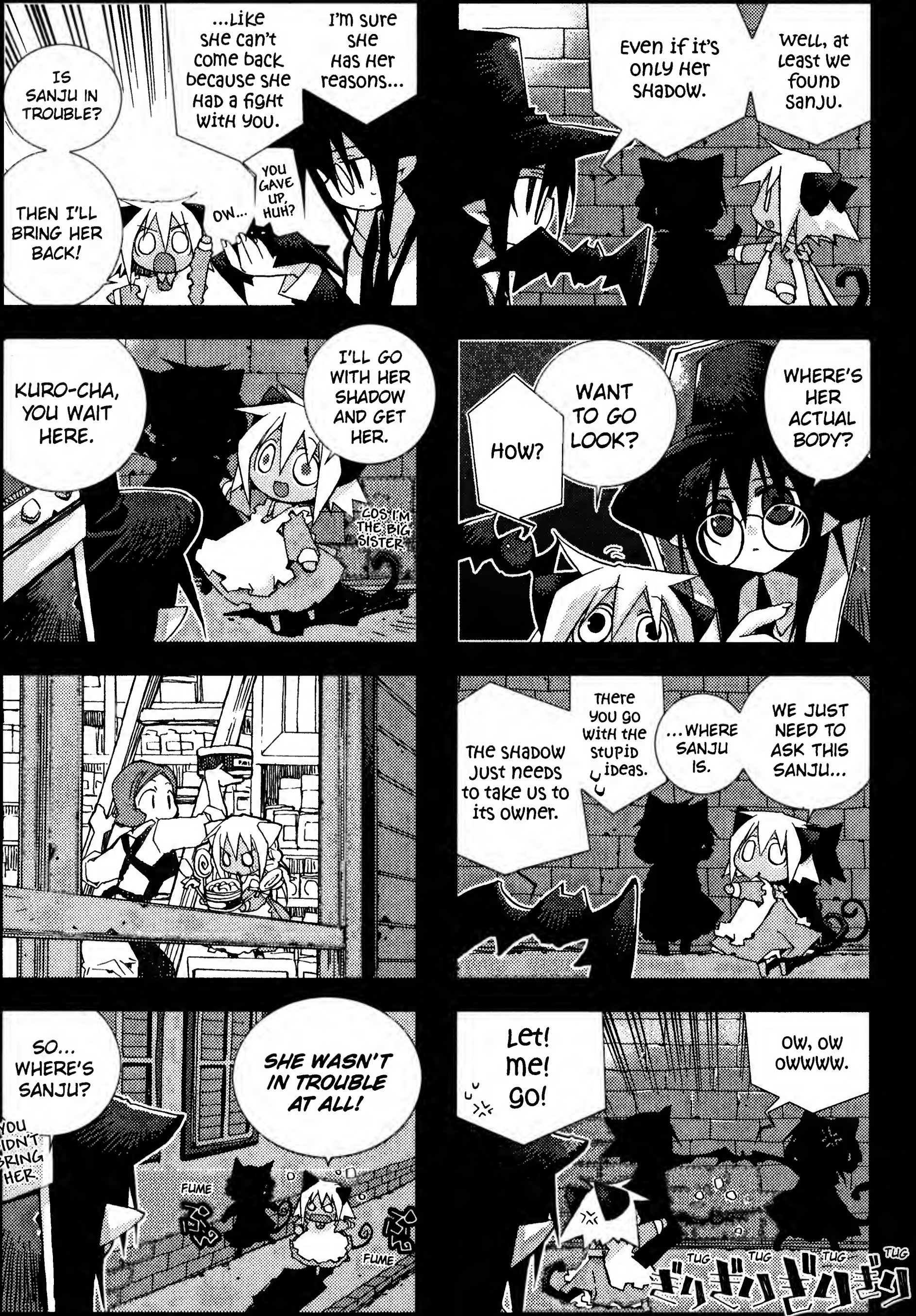

When are you going to tell them the truth?
ABOUT WHAT?
About their profes-sor.
I AL-READY TOLD THEM...
...THAT THEY "CAN'T SEE PROFES-SOR" AND "HE WENT TO A DIFFERENT WORLD."
はあ PANT
はあ PANT
They still believe they can see him again.
......
I HAVE NO INTENTION OF SAYING ANYTHING.
SFX: TAP TAP TAP
PRO-FES-SOR!
ぎゅ HUG
THOSE KIDS STILL DON'T KNOW A LOT OF THINGS...
THE REST IS UP TO THEM. THEY NEED TO FIND THE ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES.
...INCLUD-ING...
...THE MEANING OF PEOPLE "DYING."
IT'LL...
...PROBABLY TAKE TIME.

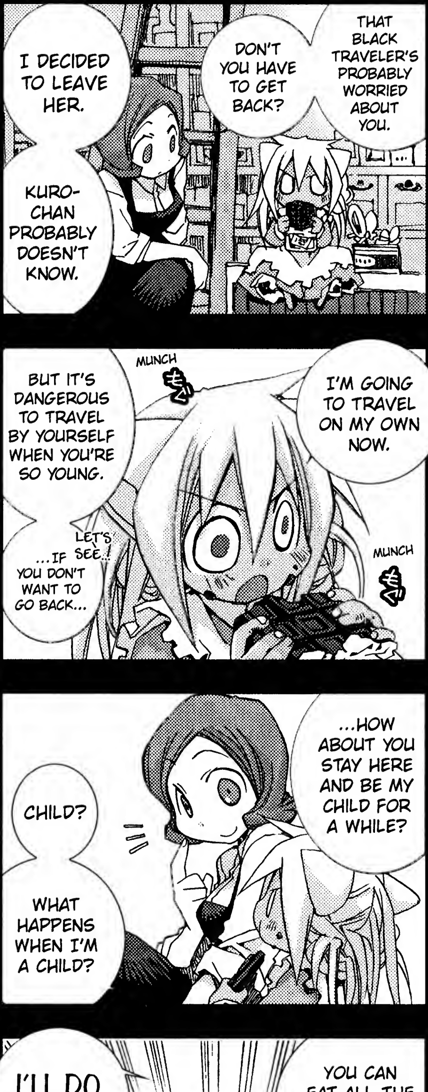

?
WHO'S THIS KID?
MAYBE SHE'S A BEGGAR.
THERE ARE A LOT OF THEM LATELY.
IT WASN'T...
...THE PROFESSOR.
OH NO.
SHE STARTED CRYING.
DAMMIT. HERE, TAKE THIS GOLD COIN.
JUST HURRY UP AND LEAVE.
SANJU LEFT?
What Happened?
SHE LEFT SAYING SHE FOUND THE PROFESSOR.
BUT IT WASN'T HIM AT ALL.
WHEN SHE REALLY WISHES FOR SOMETHING, SHE THINKS SHE SEES IT.
LIKE RIGHT NOW.
BECAUSE SHE HATES ME?
NO, SANJU LIKES KURO-CHA.
BUT SHE LIKES THE PROFESSOR MORE.
THE PROFESSOR USED TO BRAID HER HAIR.
!
SANJU IS WAITING FOR PROFESSOR TO FIX IT.
BUT SHE CAN'T SEE HIM YET.

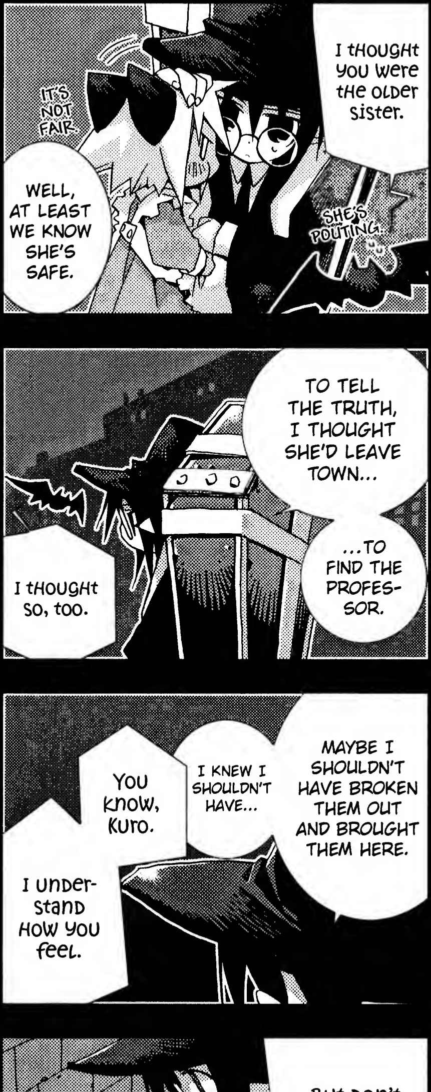

.........
OH? WELCOME.
I WAS ABOUT TO CLOSE UP.
OH WELL.
ARE YOU HERE BY YOURSELF?
WHAT CAN I BUY WITH THIS SHINY THING?
HM? WHAT?
MY! WITH THIS?
YOU CAN BUY ANYTHING IN THE STORE WITH THIS.
THEN...
RUB RUB
...CANDY, CANDY...
...AND PROFESSOR.
?

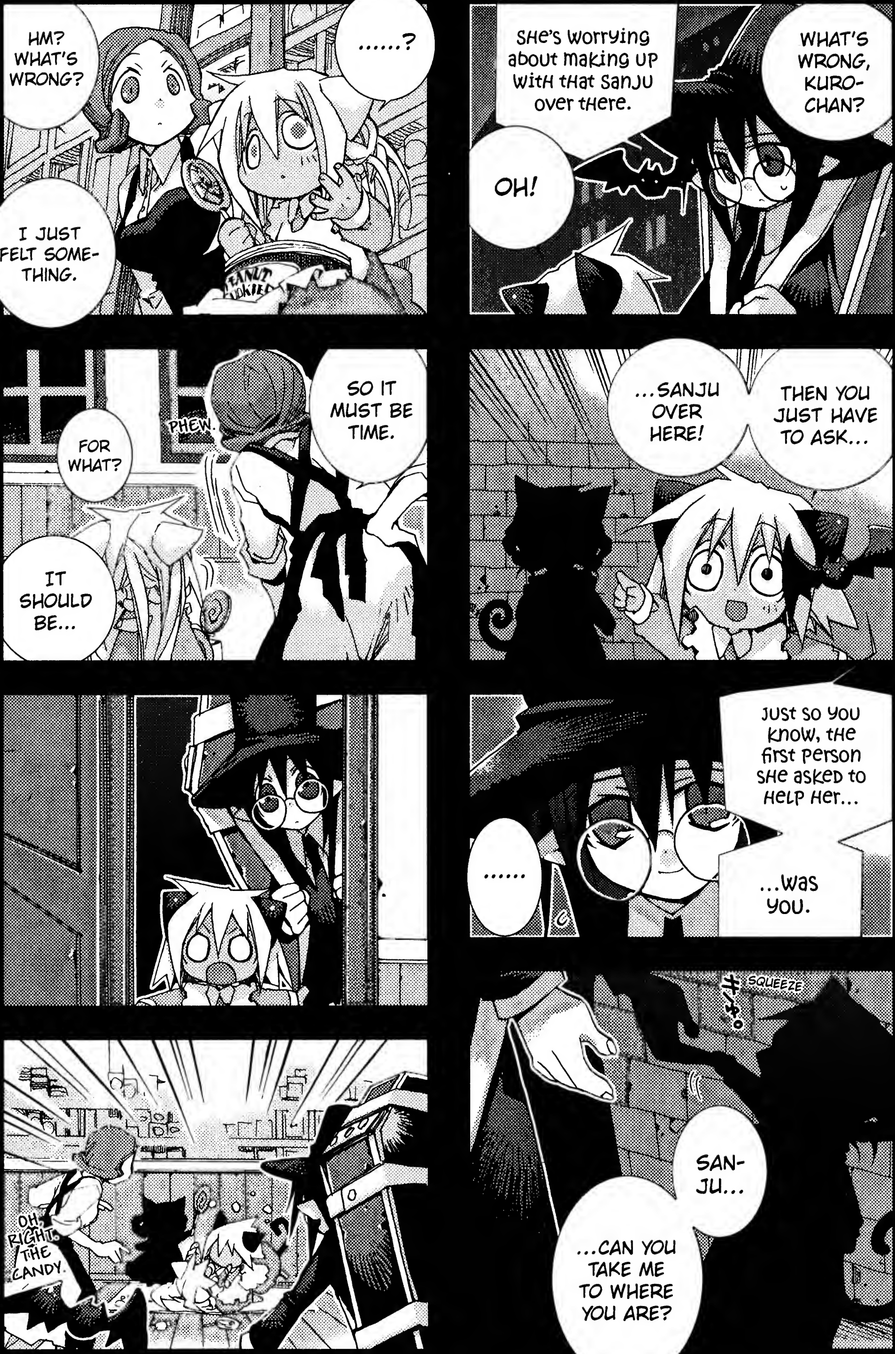

HEY, CAN YOU GUYS HOLD UP?
HUH? WHY're YOU WALKING SO SLOW, KURO?
WELL, ACTUALLY...
...I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I FEEL LIKE SOMEONE'S PULLING ME.
HUH!?
LIKE SOMEONE'S TUGGING ON MY CLOTHES.
OH!
!!
SANJU?

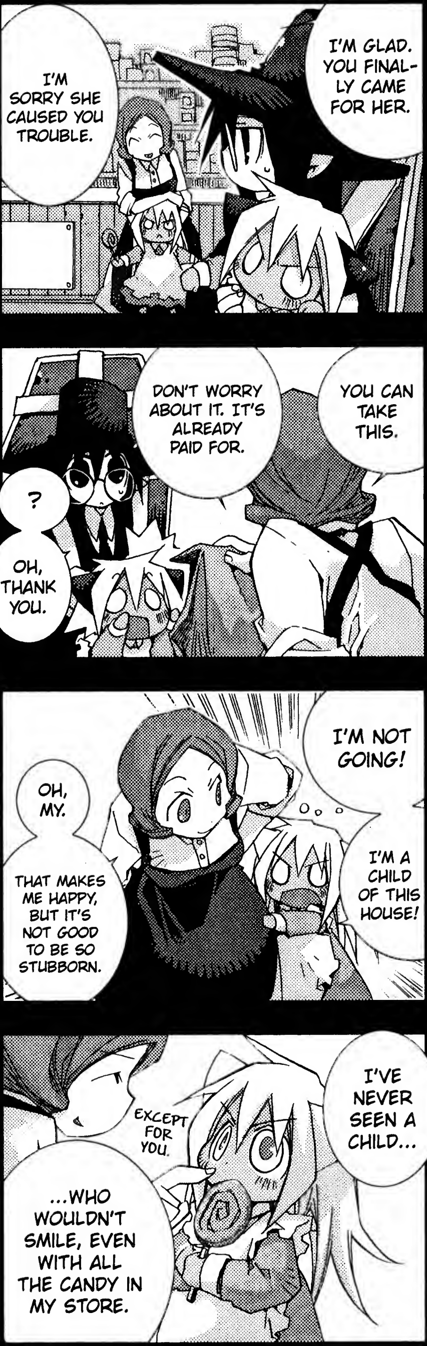

THE PROFESSOR...
...USED TO ALWAYS TIE MY LONG HAIR.
BUT HE WAS HORRIBLE AT BRAIDING MY HAIR.
HE WOULD HIT MY EARS WITH THE BRUSH, OR PULL MY HAIR.
IT WAS JUST A LITTLE TIME...
...WHEN I COULD HAVE THE PROFESSOR ALL TO MYSELF.
IT WAS MY WORST...
...AND MY FAVORITEST TIME.

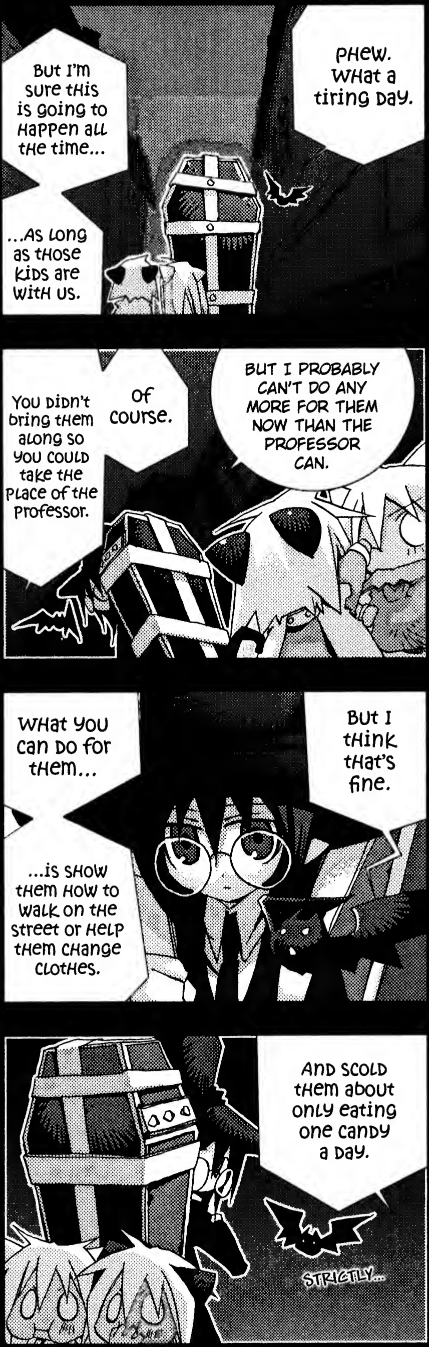

Well, at least we found Sanju.
Even if it's only her shadow.
Where's her actual body?
Want to go look?
How?
We just need to ask this Sanju...
...where Sanju is.
There you go with the stupid ideas.
The shadow just needs to take us to its owner.
Ow, ow owwww.
Let! me! go!
TUG TUG TUG TUG
I'm sure she has her reasons...
...like she can't come back because she had a fight with you.
Is Sanju in trouble?
Then I'll bring her back!
You gave up, huh?
Ow...
I'll go with her shadow and get her.
Kuro-cha, you wait here.
Cos I'm the big sister
She wasn't in trouble at all!
So... where's Sanju?
You didn't bring her
FUME
FUME

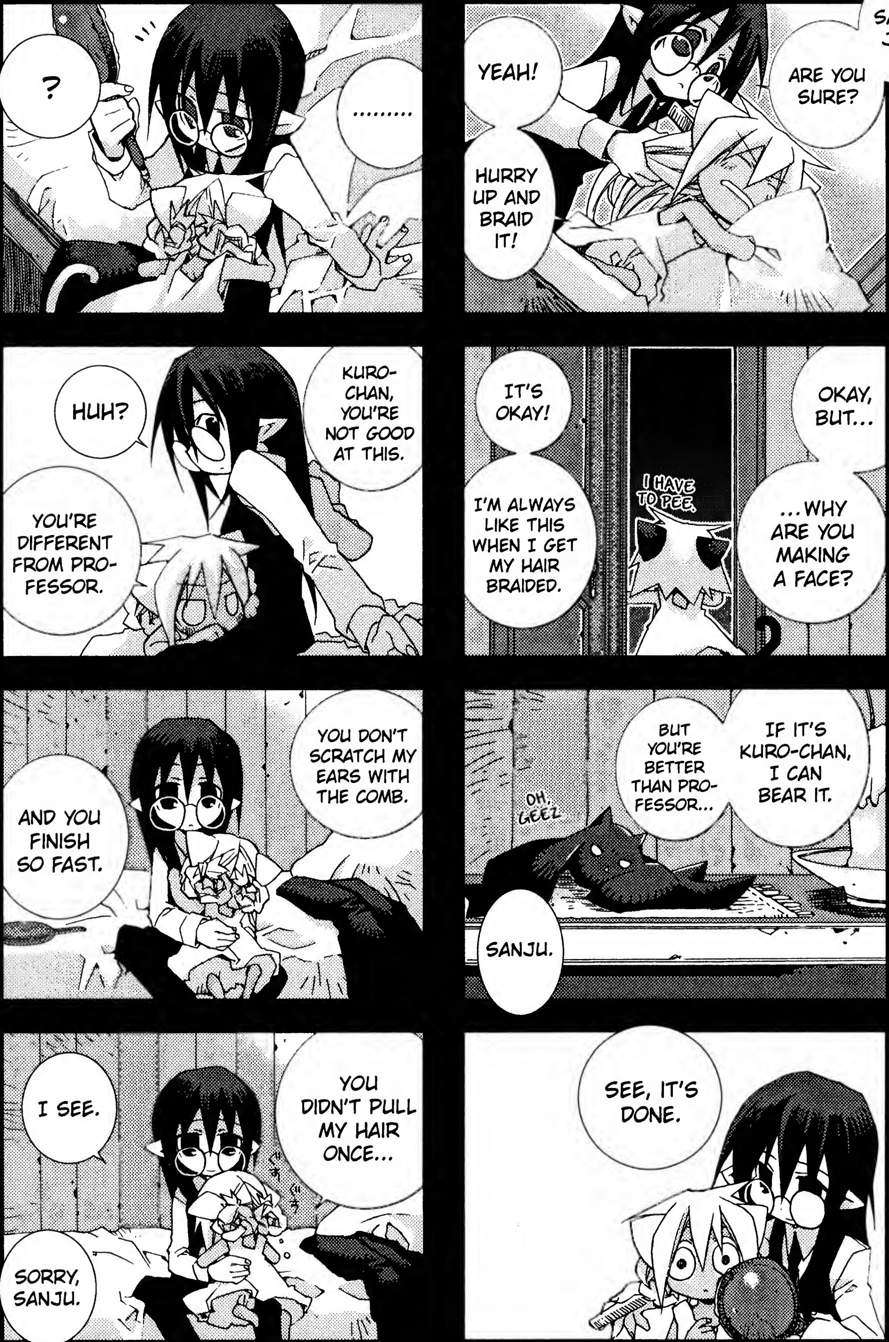

THAT BLACK TRAVELER'S PROBABLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
DON'T YOU HAVE TO GET BACK?
I DECIDED TO LEAVE HER.
KURO-CHAN PROBABLY DOESN'T KNOW.
I'M GOING TO TRAVEL ON MY OWN NOW.
MUNCH
MUNCH
BUT IT'S DANGEROUS TO TRAVEL BY YOURSELF WHEN YOU'RE SO YOUNG.
LET'S SEE...
...IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO BACK...
...HOW ABOUT YOU STAY HERE AND BE MY CHILD FOR A WHILE?
CHILD?
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I'M A CHILD?
YOU CAN EAT ALL THE CANDY AND SNACKS YOU WANT.
I'LL DO IT!!


I thought you were the older sister.
SHE'S POUTING.
IT'S NOT FAIR.
WELL, AT LEAST WE KNOW SHE'S SAFE.
TO TELL THE TRUTH, I THOUGHT SHE'D LEAVE TOWN...
...TO FIND THE PROFESSOR.
I thought so, too.
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE BROKEN THEM OUT AND BROUGHT THEM HERE.
I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE...
You know, Kuro.
I understand how you feel.
But don't say that in front of the kids.

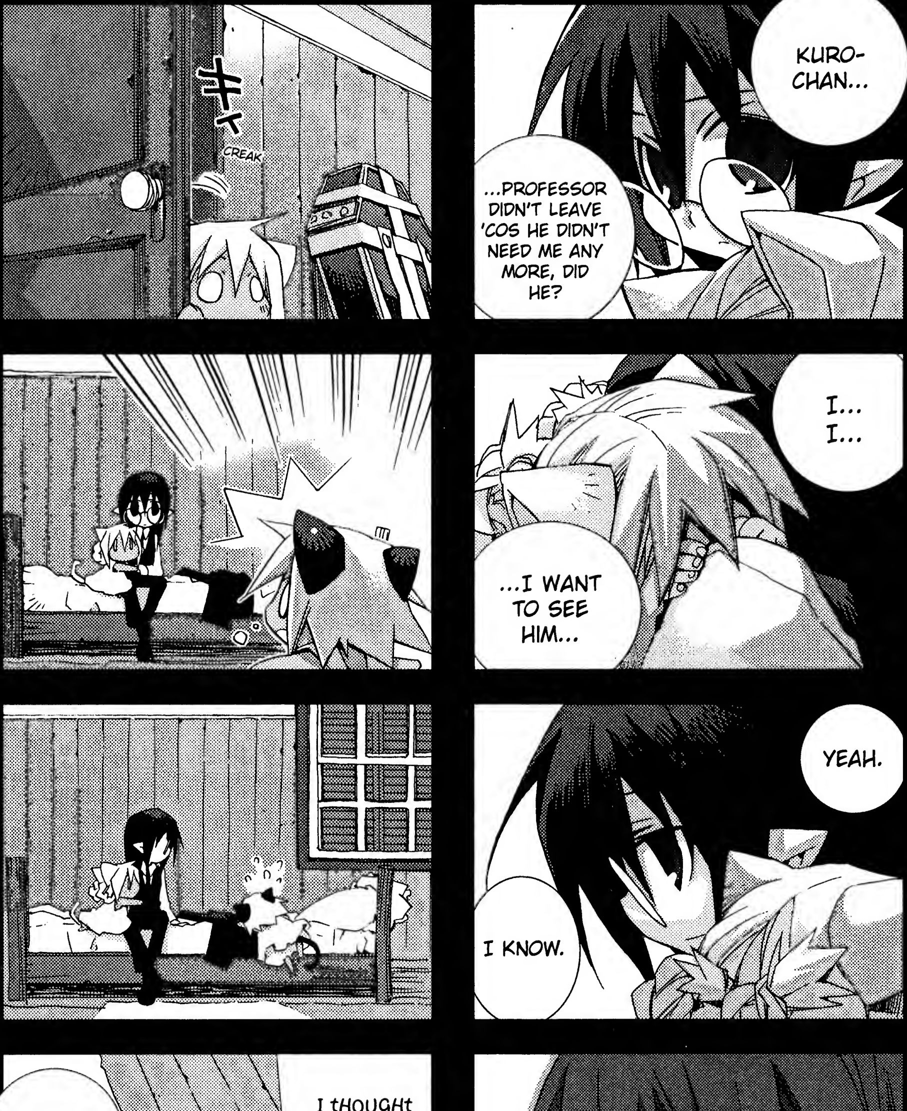

WHAT'S WRONG, KURO-CHAN?
SHE'S WORRYING ABOUT MAKING UP WITH THAT SANJU OVER THERE.
OH!
......?
HM? WHAT'S WRONG?
I JUST FELT SOMETHING.
THEN YOU JUST HAVE TO ASK...
...SANJU OVER HERE!
SO IT MUST BE TIME.
PHEW.
FOR WHAT?
IT SHOULD BE...
JUST SO YOU KNOW, THE FIRST PERSON SHE ASKED TO HELP HER...
......
...WAS YOU.
SQUEEZE
SAN-JU...
...CAN YOU TAKE ME TO WHERE YOU ARE?
OH, RIGHT. THE CANDY.

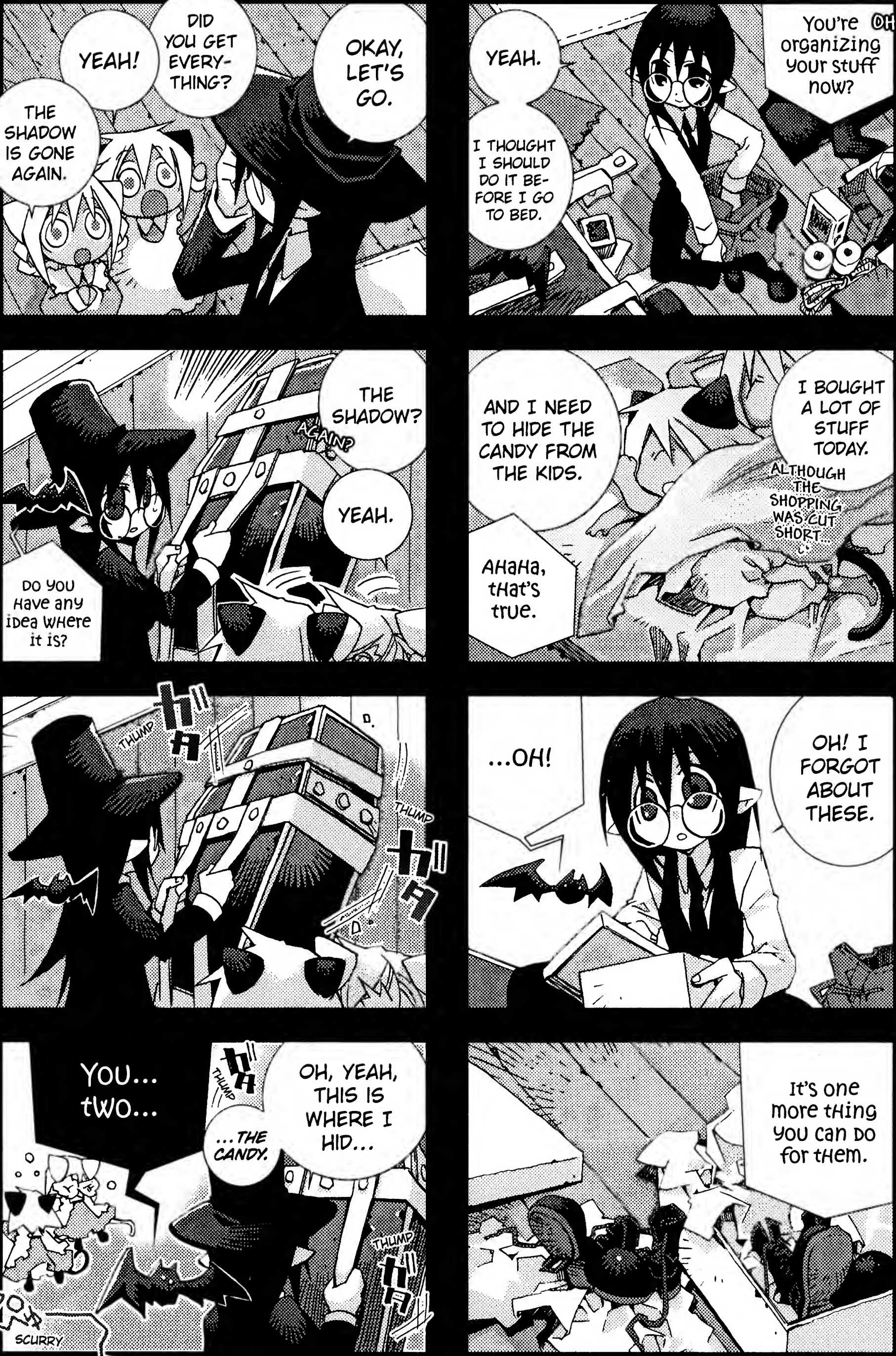

I'M GLAD. YOU FINALLY CAME FOR HER.
I'M SORRY SHE CAUSED YOU TROUBLE.
YOU CAN TAKE THIS.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT'S ALREADY PAID FOR.
?
OH, THANK YOU.
I'M NOT GOING!
I'M A CHILD OF THIS HOUSE!
OH, MY.
THAT MAKES ME HAPPY, BUT IT'S NOT GOOD TO BE SO STUBBORN.
I'VE NEVER SEEN A CHILD...
EXCEPT FOR YOU.
...WHO WOULDN'T SMILE, EVEN WITH ALL THE CANDY IN MY STORE.

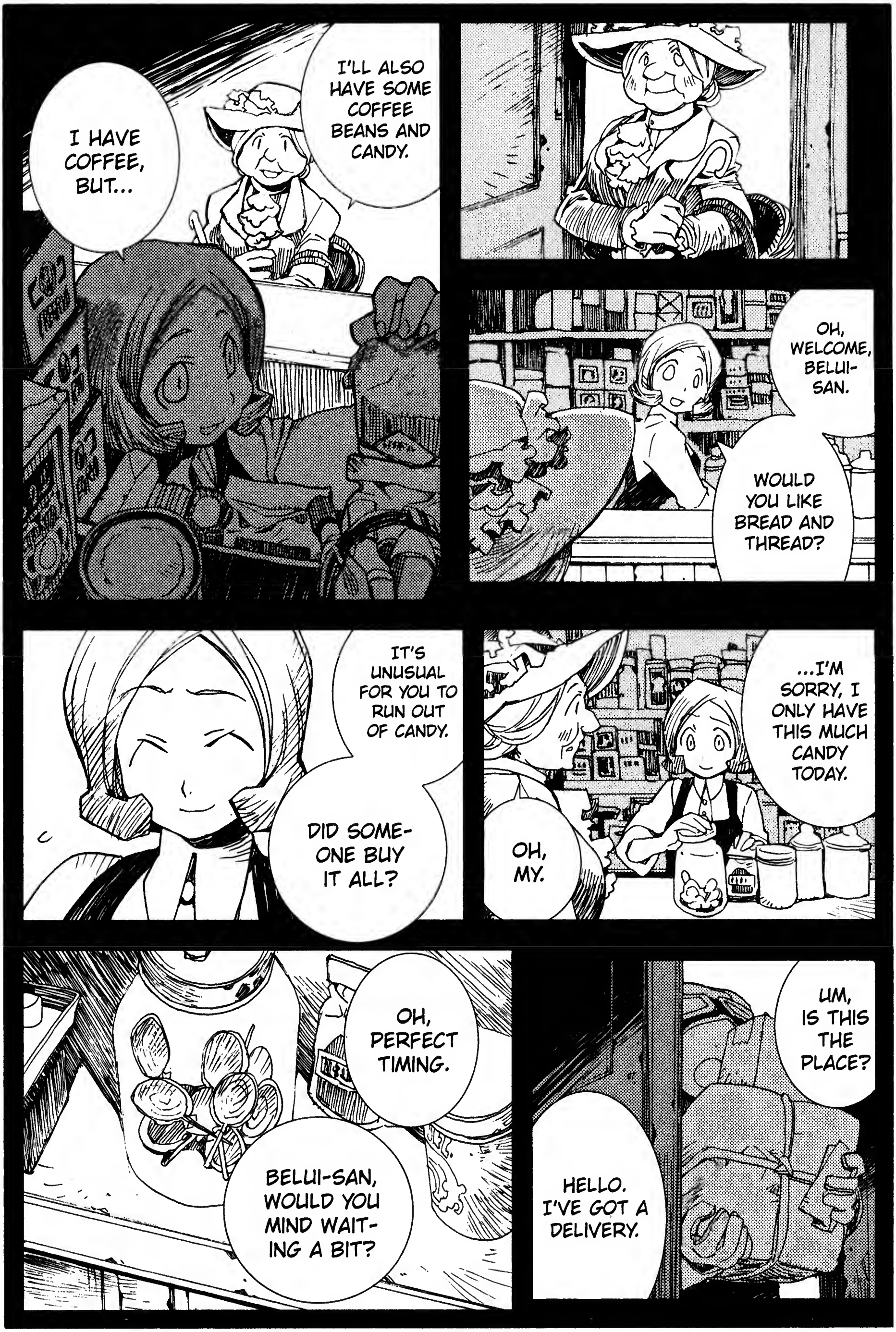

Phew. What a tiring day.
But I'm sure this is going to happen all the time...
...as long as those kids are with us.
BUT I PROBABLY CAN'T DO ANY MORE FOR THEM NOW THAN THE PROFESSOR CAN.
Of course.
You didn't bring them along so you could take the place of the professor.
But I think that's fine.
What you can do for them...
...is show them how to walk on the street or help them change clothes.
And scold them about only eating one candy a day.
STRICTLY...

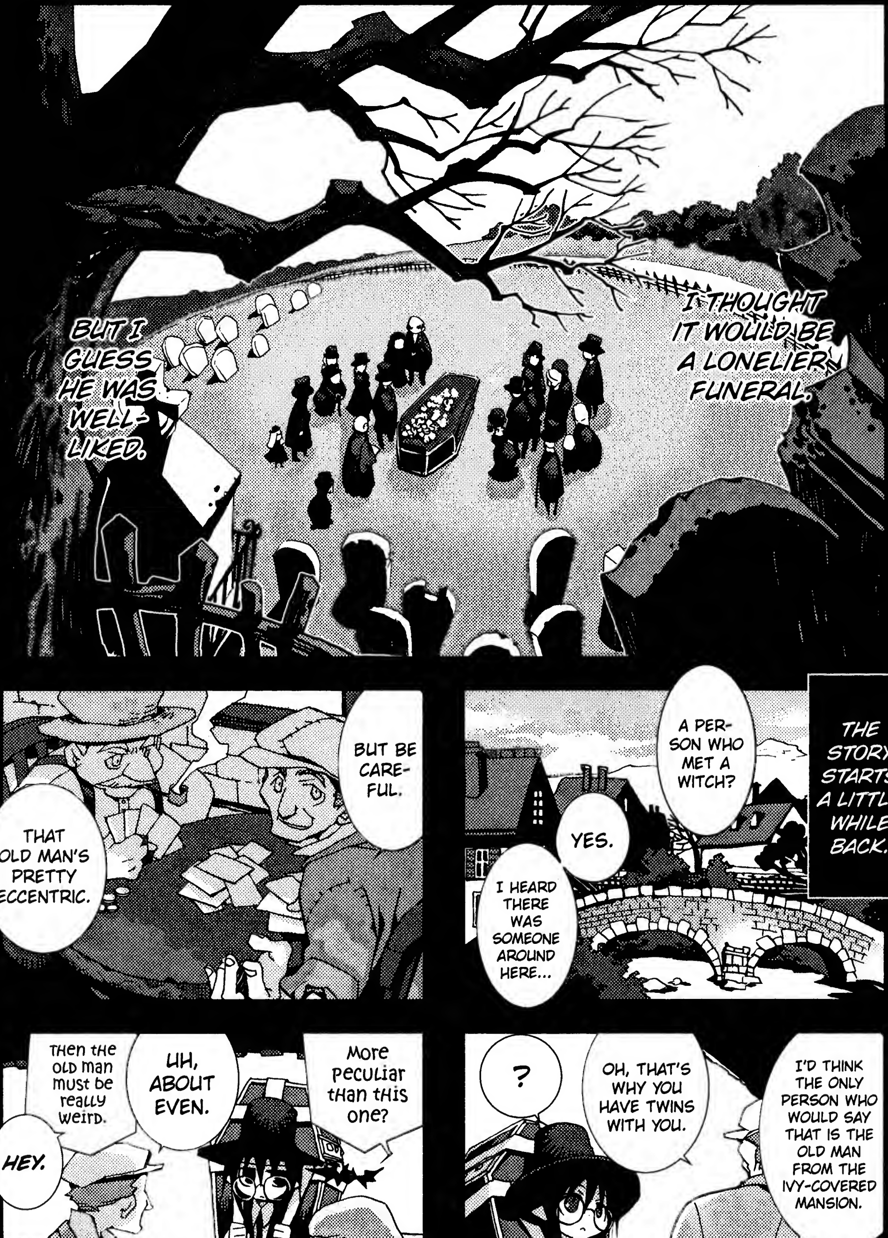

SAN-JU.
ARE YOU SURE?
YEAH!
HURRY UP AND BRAID IT!
OKAY, BUT...
...WHY ARE YOU MAKING A FACE?
IT'S OKAY!
I'M ALWAYS LIKE THIS WHEN I GET MY HAIR BRAIDED.
I HAVE TO PEE.
IF IT'S KURO-CHAN, I CAN BEAR IT.
BUT YOU'RE BETTER THAN PROFESSOR...
OH, GEEZ
SANJU.
SEE, IT'S DONE.
.........
?
KURO-CHAN, YOU'RE NOT GOOD AT THIS.
HUH?
YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM PROFESSOR.
YOU DON'T SCRATCH MY EARS WITH THE COMB.
AND YOU FINISH SO FAST.
YOU DIDN'T PULL MY HAIR ONCE...
I SEE.
SORRY, SANJU.

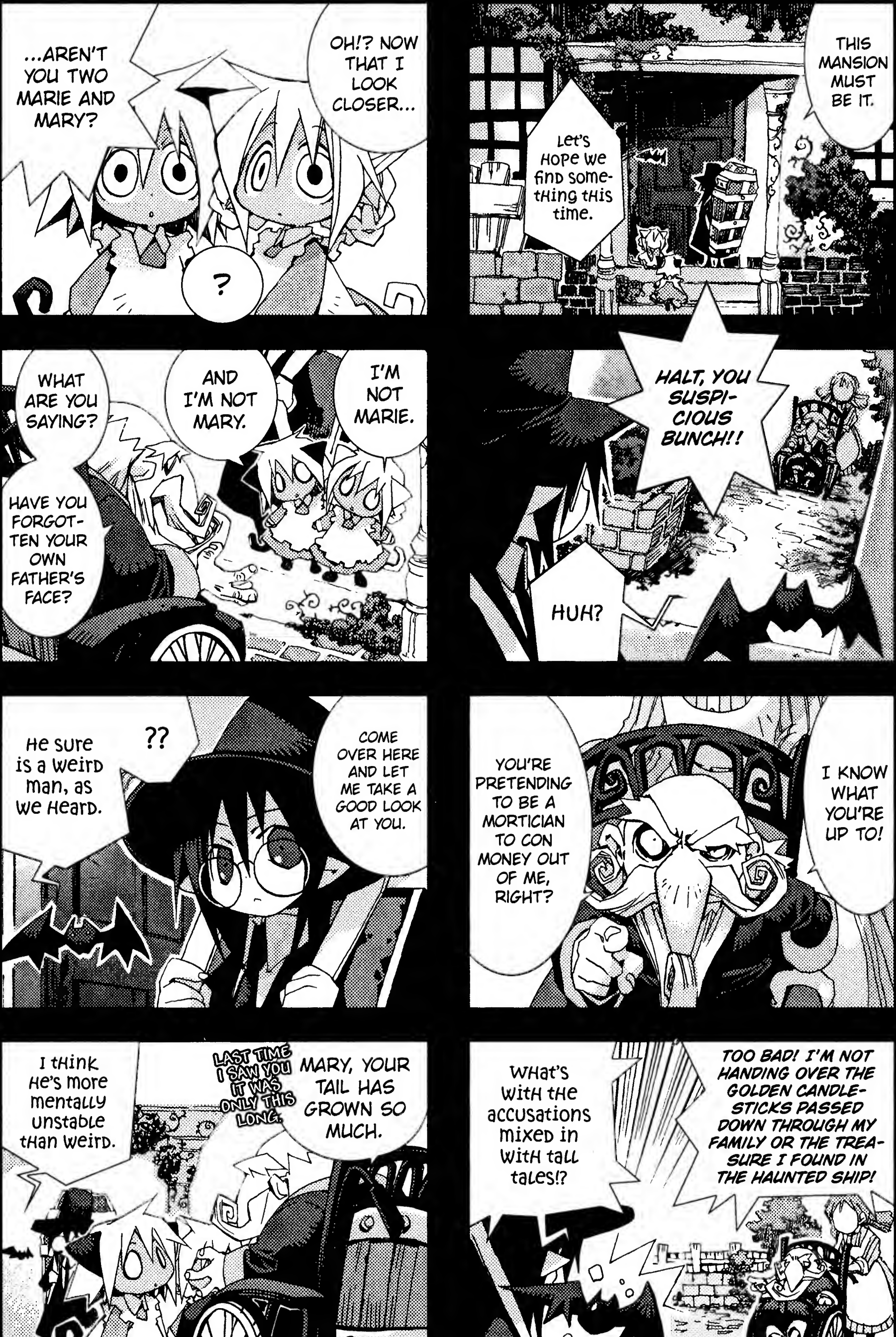
SFX: SNIFF SNIFF

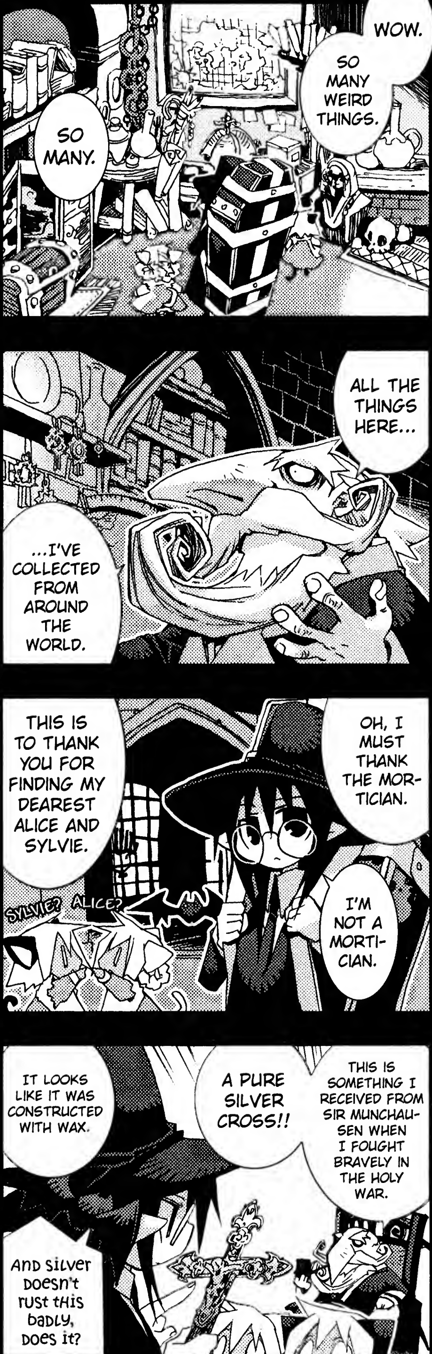

KURO-CHAN...
...PROFESSOR DIDN'T LEAVE 'COS HE DIDN'T NEED ME ANY MORE, DID HE?
I... I...
...I WANT TO SEE HIM...
YEAH.
I KNOW.
I KNOW, SANJU.
キィ
CREAK
I thought you were the big sister?
IT'S OKAY!

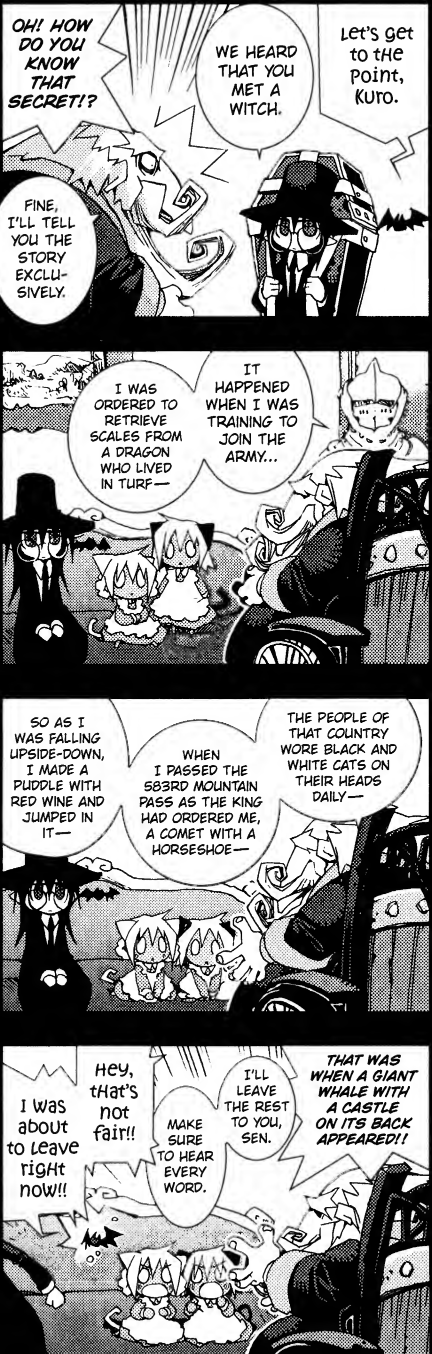

OH!
You're organizing your stuff now?
YEAH.
I THOUGHT I SHOULD DO IT BEFORE I GO TO BED.
I BOUGHT A LOT OF STUFF TODAY.
ALTHOUGH THE SHOPPING WAS CUT SHORT...
AND I NEED TO HIDE THE CANDY FROM THE KIDS.
AHaHa, tHat's true.
OH! I FORGOT ABOUT THESE.
...OH!
It's one more tHing you can do for tHem.
OKAY, LET'S GO.
DID YOU GET EVERYTHING?
YEAH!
THE SHADOW IS GONE AGAIN.
THE SHADOW?
AGAIN?
YEAH.
Do you Have any idea WHere it is?
THUMP
ガタ
THUMP
ガタ
OH, YEAH, THIS IS WHERE I HID...
...THE CANDY.
THUMP
ガタ
YOU... tWO...
THUMP
ガタ
SCURRY

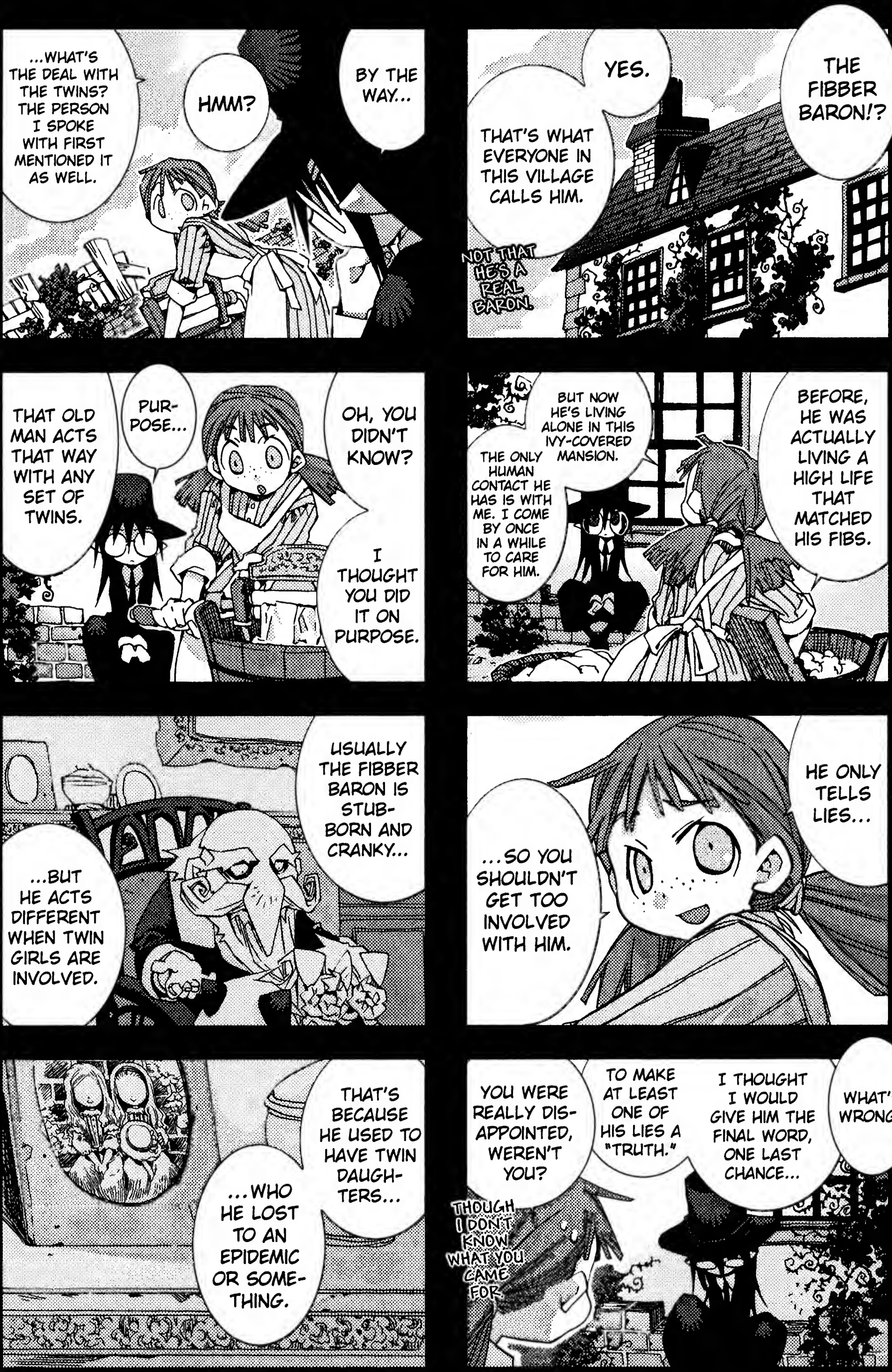

OH, WELCOME, BELUI-SAN.
WOULD YOU LIKE BREAD AND THREAD?
I'LL ALSO HAVE SOME COFFEE BEANS AND CANDY.
I HAVE COFFEE, BUT...
...I'M SORRY, I ONLY HAVE THIS MUCH CANDY TODAY.
OH, MY.
IT'S UNUSUAL FOR YOU TO RUN OUT OF CANDY.
DID SOME-ONE BUY IT ALL?
UM, IS THIS THE PLACE?
HELLO. I'VE GOT A DELIVERY.
OH, PERFECT TIMING.
BELUI-SAN, WOULD YOU MIND WAIT-ING A BIT?

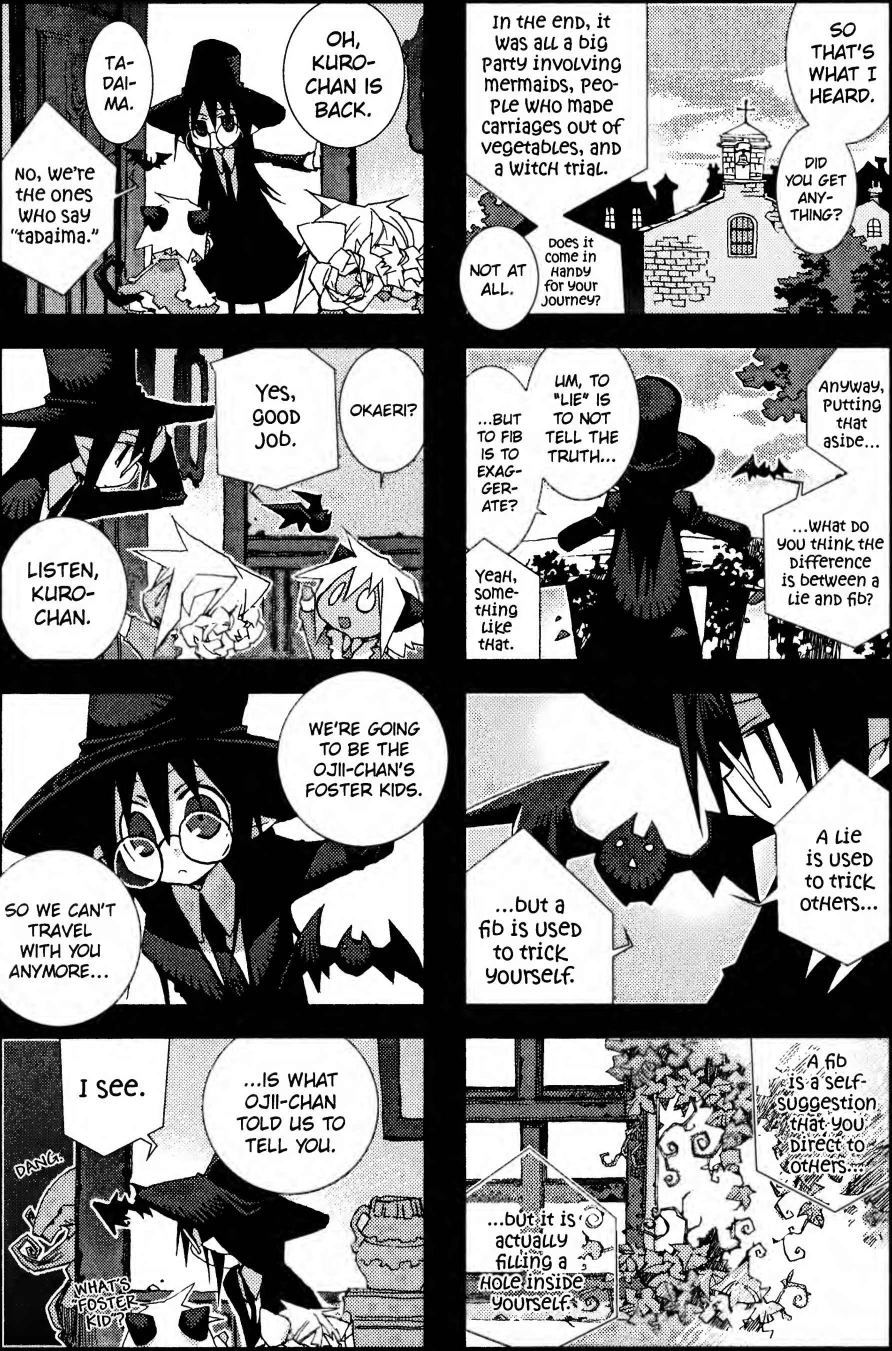

I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A LONELIER FUNERAL.
BUT I GUESS HE WAS WELL-LIKED.
THE STORY STARTS A LITTLE WHILE BACK.
A PERSON WHO MET A WITCH?
YES.
I HEARD THERE WAS SOMEONE AROUND HERE...
BUT BE CAREFUL.
THAT OLD MAN'S PRETTY ECCENTRIC.
I'D THINK THE ONLY PERSON WHO WOULD SAY THAT IS THE OLD MAN FROM THE IVY-COVERED MANSION.
OH, THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TWINS WITH YOU.
?
More peculiar than this one?
UH, ABOUT EVEN.
Then the old man must be really weird.
HEY.

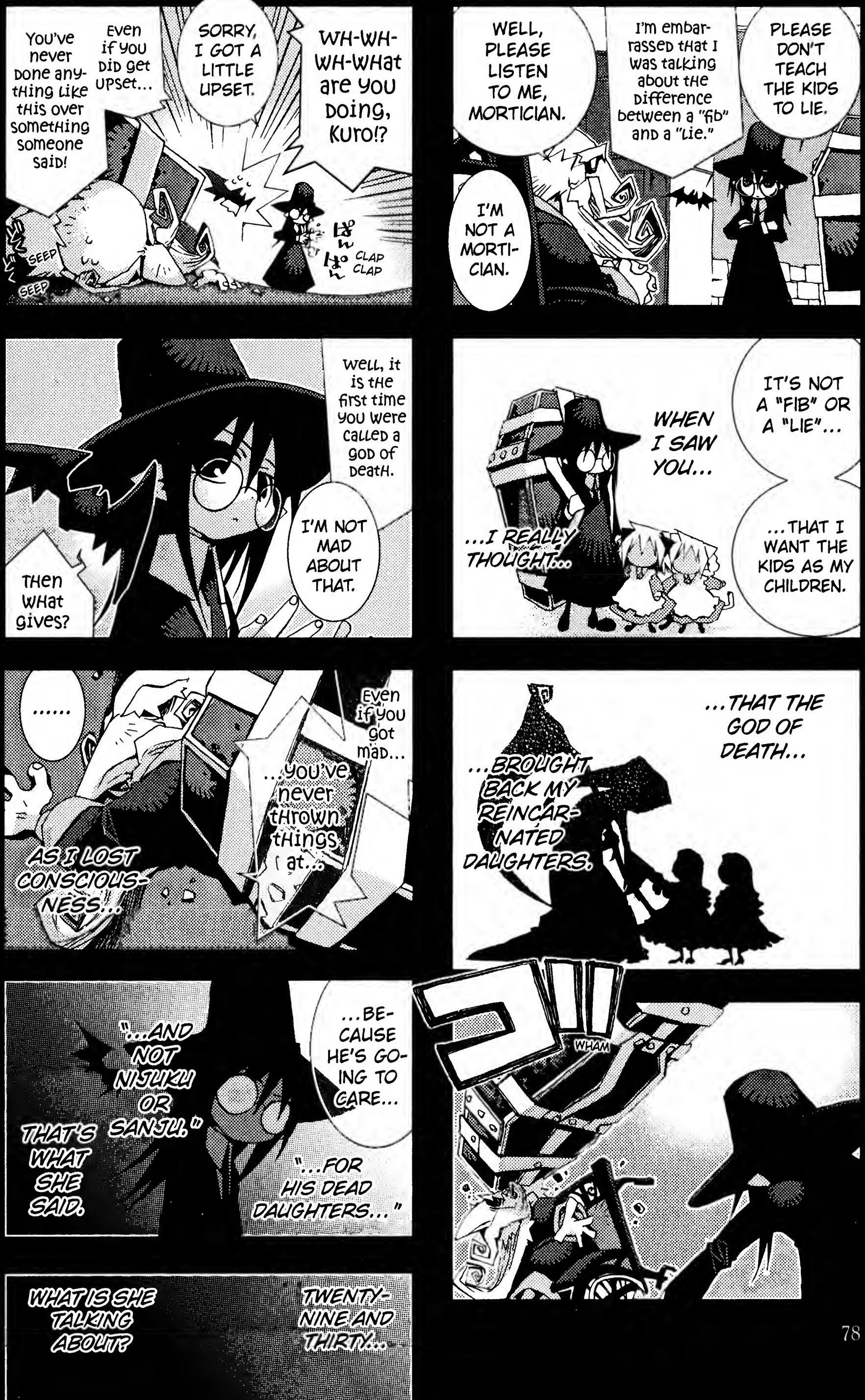

THIS MANSION MUST BE IT.
Let's Hope we find something this time.
HALT, YOU SUSPICIOUS BUNCH!!
HUH?
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO!
YOU'RE PRETENDING TO BE A MORTICIAN TO CON MONEY OUT OF ME, RIGHT?
TOO BAD! I'M NOT HANDING OVER THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS PASSED DOWN THROUGH MY FAMILY OR THE TREASURE I FOUND IN THE HAUNTED SHIP!
What's with the accusations mixed in with tall tales!?
OH!? NOW THAT I LOOK CLOSER...
...AREN'T YOU TWO MARIE AND MARY?
?
I'M NOT MARIE.
AND I'M NOT MARY.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR OWN FATHER'S FACE?
COME OVER HERE AND LET ME TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT YOU.
??
He sure is a weird man, as we Heard.
MARY, YOUR TAIL HAS GROWN SO MUCH.
LAST TIME I SAW YOU IT WAS ONLY THIS LONG.
I think He's more mentally unstable than weird.

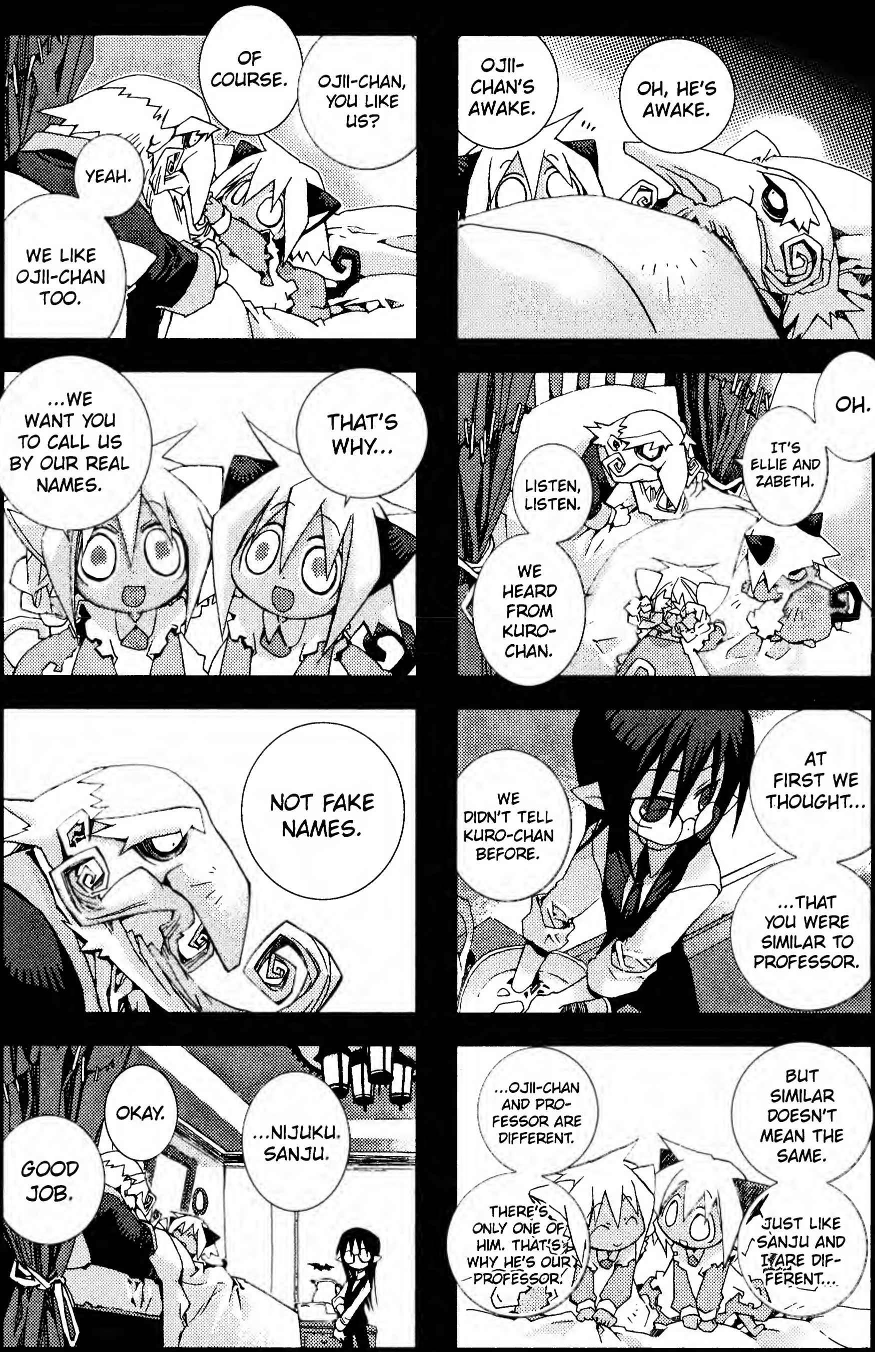

WOW.
SO MANY WEIRD THINGS.
SO MANY.
ALL THE THINGS HERE...
...I'VE COLLECTED FROM AROUND THE WORLD.
OH, I MUST THANK THE MORTICIAN.
THIS IS TO THANK YOU FOR FINDING MY DEAREST ALICE AND SYLVIE.
I'M NOT A MORTICIAN.
ALICE?
SYLVIE?
THIS IS SOMETHING I RECEIVED FROM SIR MUNCHAUSEN WHEN I FOUGHT BRAVELY IN THE HOLY WAR.
A PURE SILVER CROSS!!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS CONSTRUCTED WITH WAX.
And silver doesn't rust this badly, does it?

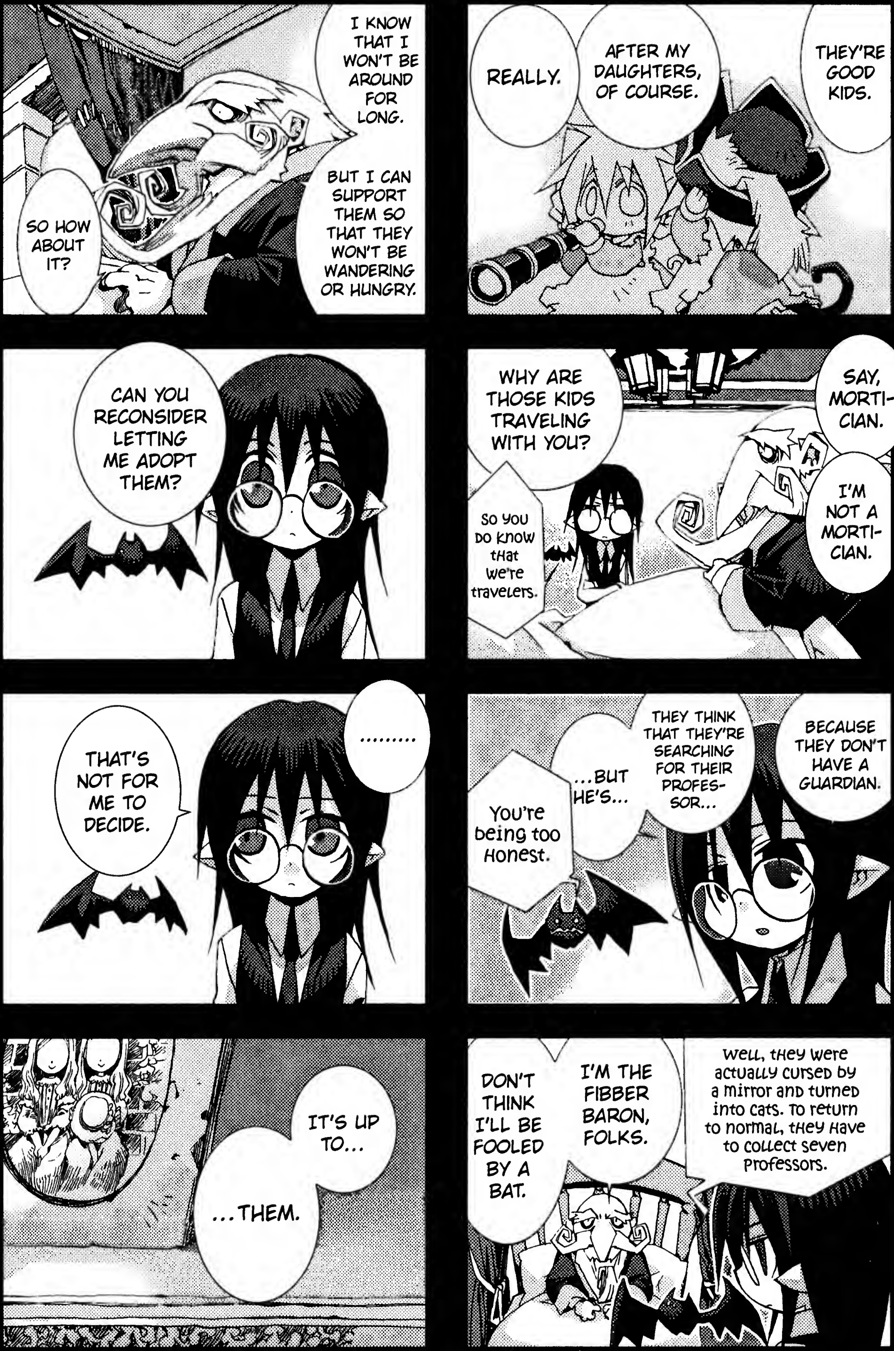

Let's get to the Point, Kuro.
WE HEARD THAT YOU MET A WITCH.
OH! HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT SECRET!?
FINE, I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY EXCLUSIVELY.
IT HAPPENED WHEN I WAS TRAINING TO JOIN THE ARMY...
I WAS ORDERED TO RETRIEVE SCALES FROM A DRAGON WHO LIVED IN TURF—
THE PEOPLE OF THAT COUNTRY WORE BLACK AND WHITE CATS ON THEIR HEADS DAILY—
WHEN I PASSED THE 583RD MOUNTAIN PASS AS THE KING HAD ORDERED ME, A COMET WITH A HORSESHOE—
SO AS I WAS FALLING UPSIDE-DOWN, I MADE A PUDDLE WITH RED WINE AND JUMPED IN IT—
THAT WAS WHEN A GIANT WHALE WITH A CASTLE ON ITS BACK APPEARED!!
I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU, SEN.
MAKE SURE TO HEAR EVERY WORD.
Hey, that's not fair!!
I was about to leave right now!!

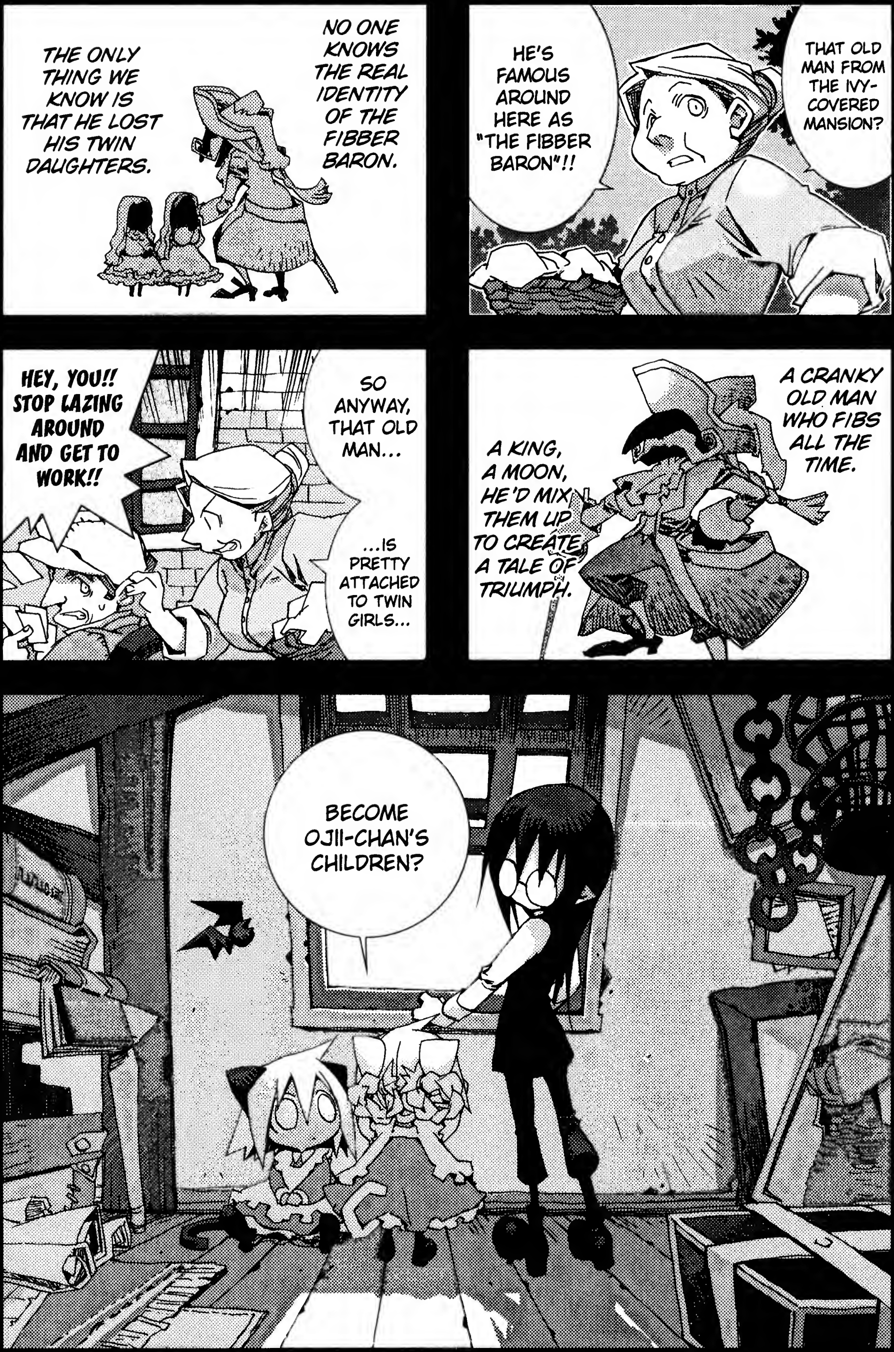

THE FIBBER BARON!?
YES.
THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE IN THIS VILLAGE CALLS HIM.
NOT THAT HE'S A REAL BARON.
BEFORE, HE WAS ACTUALLY LIVING A HIGH LIFE THAT MATCHED HIS FIBS.
BUT NOW HE'S LIVING ALONE IN THIS IVY-COVERED MANSION.
THE ONLY HUMAN CONTACT HE HAS IS WITH ME. I COME BY ONCE IN A WHILE TO CARE FOR HIM.
HE ONLY TELLS LIES...
...SO YOU SHOULDN'T GET TOO INVOLVED WITH HIM.
WHAT'S WRONG?
I THOUGHT I WOULD GIVE HIM THE FINAL WORD, ONE LAST CHANCE...
TO MAKE AT LEAST ONE OF HIS LIES A "TRUTH."
YOU WERE REALLY DISAPPOINTED, WEREN'T YOU?
THOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU CAME FOR.
BY THE WAY...
HMM?
...WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE TWINS? THE PERSON I SPOKE WITH FIRST MENTIONED IT AS WELL.
OH, YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
I THOUGHT YOU DID IT ON PURPOSE.
PURPOSE...
THAT OLD MAN ACTS THAT WAY WITH ANY SET OF TWINS.
USUALLY THE FIBBER BARON IS STUBBORN AND CRANKY...
...BUT HE ACTS DIFFERENT WHEN TWIN GIRLS ARE INVOLVED.
THAT'S BECAUSE HE USED TO HAVE TWIN DAUGHTERS...
...WHO HE LOST TO AN EPIDEMIC OR SOMETHING.

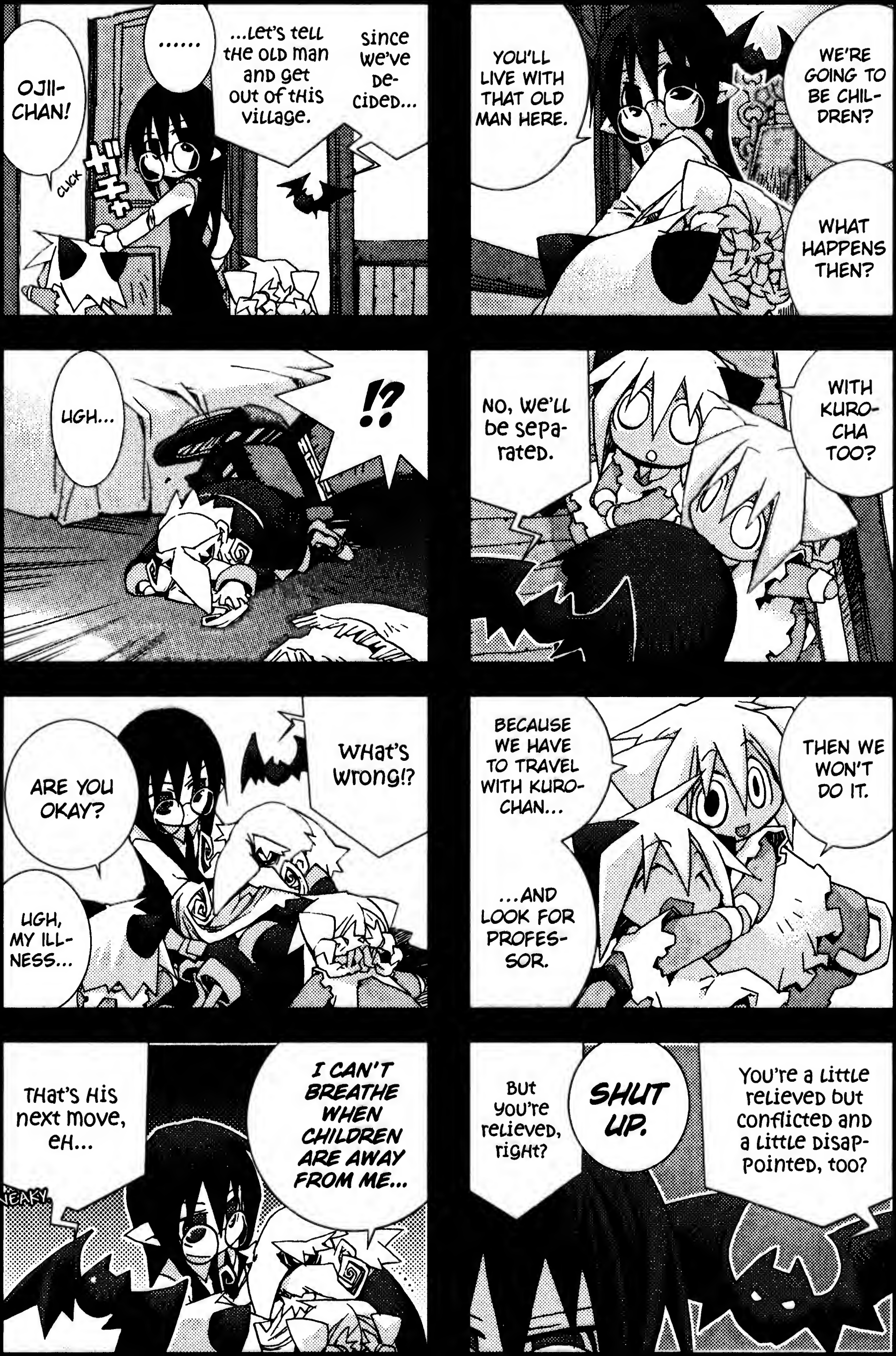

SO THAT'S WHAT I HEARD.
DID YOU GET ANYTHING?
In the end, it was all a big party involving mermaids, people who made carriages out of vegetables, and a witch trial.
Does it come in handy for your journey?
NOT AT ALL.
Anyway, putting that aside...
...What do you think the difference is between a lie and fib?
UM, TO "LIE" IS TO NOT TELL THE TRUTH...
...BUT TO FIB IS TO EXAGGERATE?
Yeah, something like that.
A lie is used to trick others...
...but a fib is used to trick yourself.
A fib is a self-suggestion that you direct to others...
...but it is actually filling a hole inside yourself.
OH, KURO-CHAN IS BACK.
TA-DAI-MA.
No, we're the ones who say "tadaima."
OKAERI?
Yes, good job.
LISTEN, KURO-CHAN.
WE'RE GOING TO BE THE OJII-CHAN'S FOSTER KIDS.
SO WE CAN'T TRAVEL WITH YOU ANYMORE...
...IS WHAT OJII-CHAN TOLD US TO TELL YOU.
I see.
DANG.
WHAT'S "FOSTER KID"?

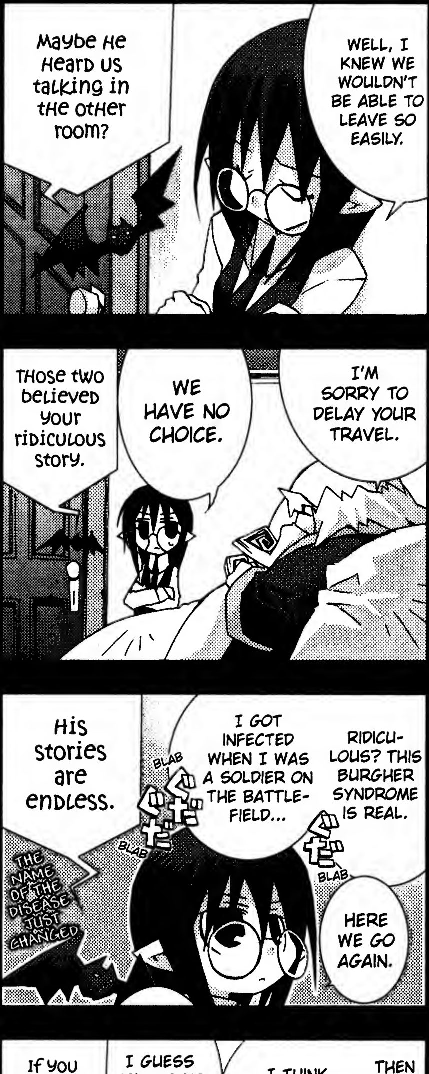

PLEASE DON'T TEACH THE KIDS TO LIE.
I'm embarrassed that I was talking about the difference between a "fib" and a "lie."
WELL, PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, MORTICIAN.
I'M NOT A MORTICIAN.
WHEN I SAW YOU...
...I REALLY THOUGHT...
IT'S NOT A "FIB" OR A "LIE"...
...THAT I WANT THE KIDS AS MY CHILDREN.
...THAT THE GOD OF DEATH...
...BROUGHT BACK MY REINCARNATED DAUGHTERS.
WHAM
WH-WH-WH-What are you doing, Kuro!?
SORRY, I GOT A LITTLE UPSET.
Even if you did get upset...
You've never done anything like this over something someone said!
SEEP
SEEP
CLAP CLAP
Well, it is the first time you were called a god of death.
I'M NOT MAD ABOUT THAT.
Then what gives?
Even if you got mad...
...you've never thrown things at...
......
AS I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS...
...BECAUSE HE'S GOING TO CARE...
"...FOR HIS DEAD DAUGHTERS..."
"...AND NOT NIJUKU OR SANJU."
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID.
TWENTY-NINE AND THIRTY...
WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?

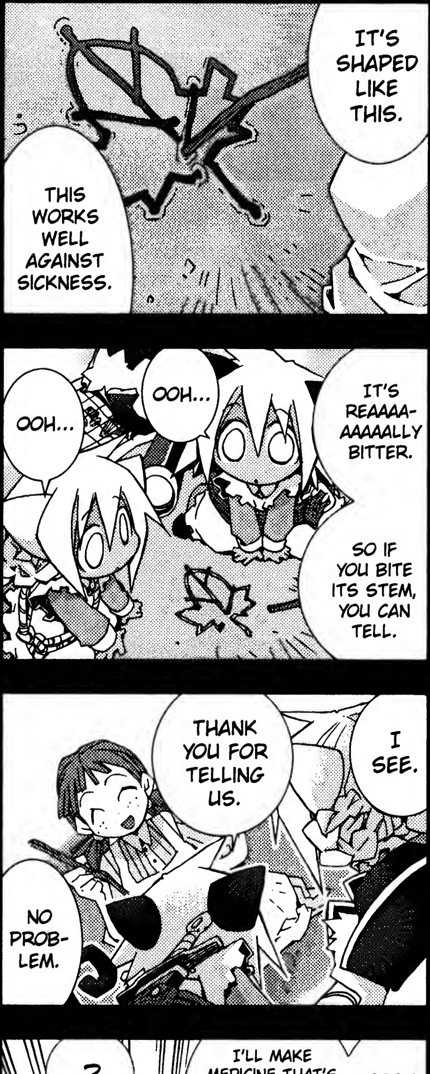

OH, HE'S AWAKE.
OJII-CHAN'S AWAKE.
OJII-CHAN, YOU LIKE US?
OF COURSE.
YEAH.
WE LIKE OJII-CHAN TOO.
OH.
IT'S ELLIE AND ZABETH.
LISTEN, LISTEN.
WE HEARD FROM KURO-CHAN.
THAT'S WHY...
...WE WANT YOU TO CALL US BY OUR REAL NAMES.
AT FIRST WE THOUGHT...
...THAT YOU WERE SIMILAR TO PROFESSOR.
WE DIDN'T TELL KURO-CHAN BEFORE.
NOT FAKE NAMES.
BUT SIMILAR DOESN'T MEAN THE SAME.
JUST LIKE SANJU AND I ARE DIFFERENT...
...OJII-CHAN AND PROFESSOR ARE DIFFERENT.
THERE'S ONLY ONE OF HIM. THAT'S WHY HE'S OUR PROFESSOR.
...NIJUKU. SANJU.
OKAY.
GOOD JOB.

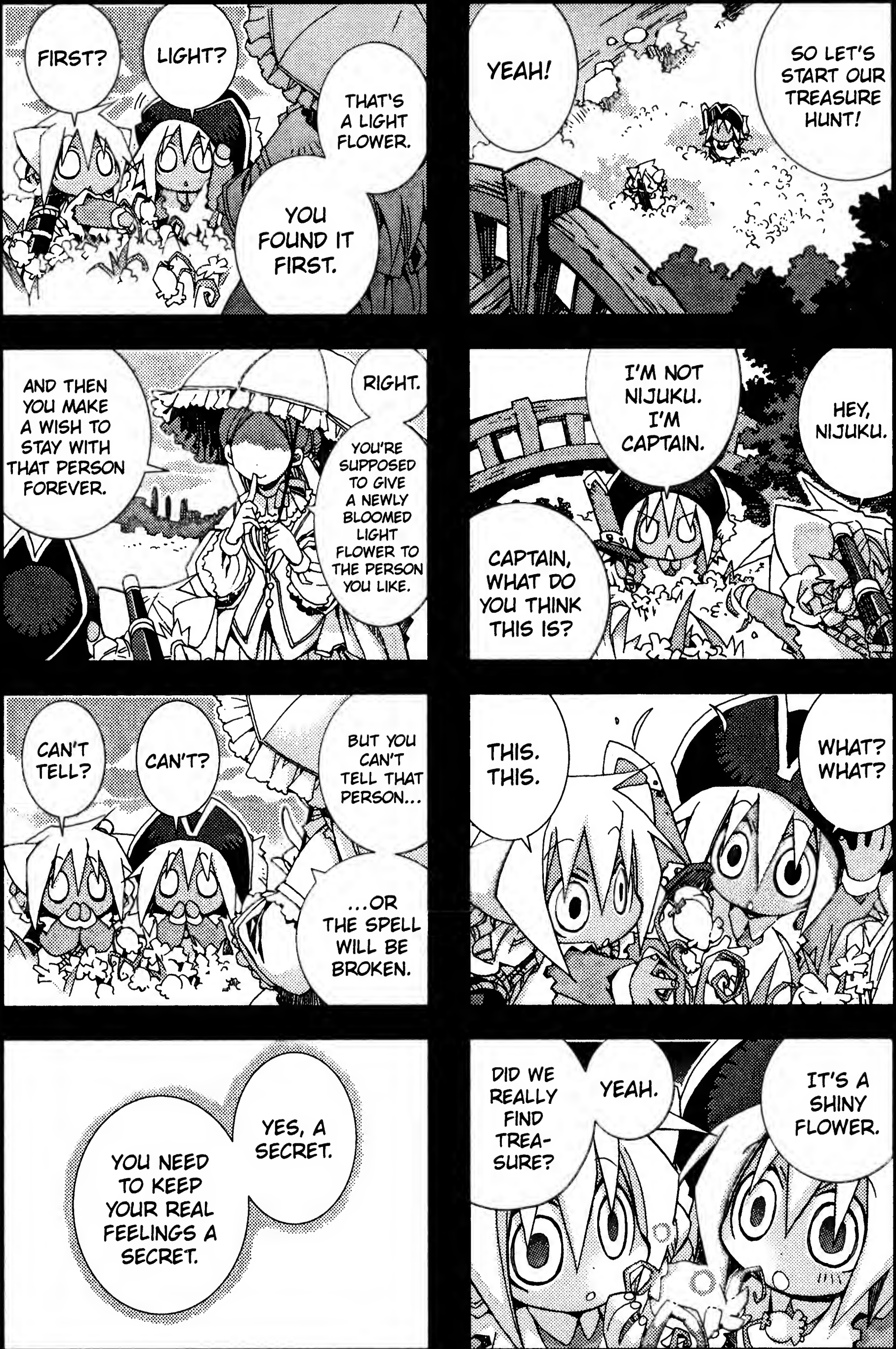

THEY'RE GOOD KIDS.
AFTER MY DAUGHTERS, OF COURSE.
REALLY.
SAY, MORTICIAN.
I'M NOT A MORTICIAN.
WHY ARE THOSE KIDS TRAVELING WITH YOU?
So you do know that we're travelers.
BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE A GUARDIAN.
THEY THINK THAT THEY'RE SEARCHING FOR THEIR PROFESSOR...
...BUT HE'S...
You're being too Honest.
Well, they were actually cursed by a mirror and turned into cats. To return to normal, they have to collect seven Professors.
I'M THE FIBBER BARON, FOLKS.
DON'T THINK I'LL BE FOOLED BY A BAT.
I KNOW THAT I WON'T BE AROUND FOR LONG.
BUT I CAN SUPPORT THEM SO THAT THEY WON'T BE WANDERING OR HUNGRY.
SO HOW ABOUT IT?
CAN YOU RECONSIDER LETTING ME ADOPT THEM?
.........
THAT'S NOT FOR ME TO DECIDE.
IT'S UP TO...
...THEM.

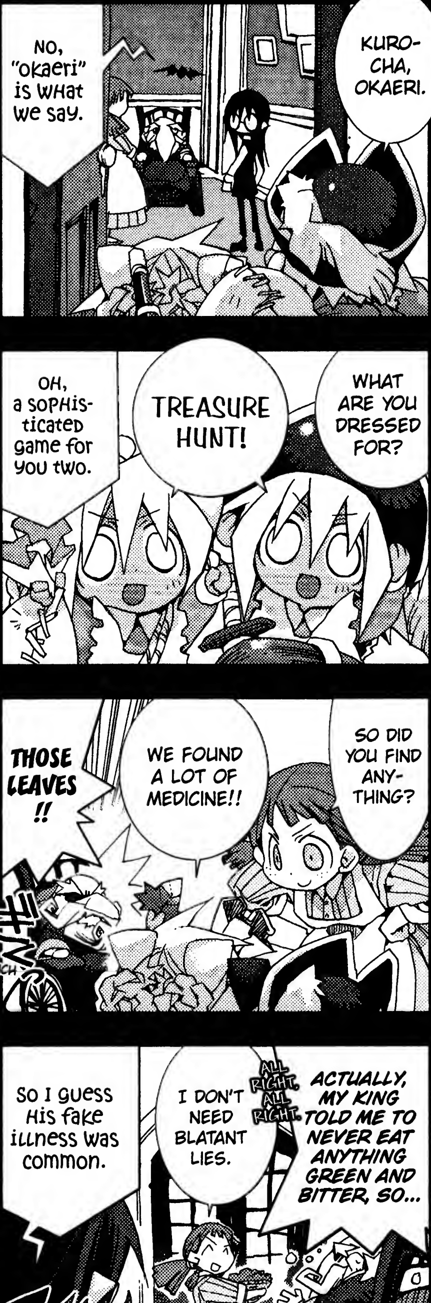

THAT OLD MAN FROM THE IVY-COVERED MANSION?
HE'S FAMOUS AROUND HERE AS "THE FIBBER BARON"!!
NO ONE KNOWS THE REAL IDENTITY OF THE FIBBER BARON.
THE ONLY THING WE KNOW IS THAT HE LOST HIS TWIN DAUGHTERS.
A CRANKY OLD MAN WHO FIBS ALL THE TIME.
A KING, A MOON, HE'D MIX THEM UP TO CREATE A TALE OF TRIUMPH.
SO ANYWAY, THAT OLD MAN...
...IS PRETTY ATTACHED TO TWIN GIRLS...
HEY, YOU!! STOP LAZING AROUND AND GET TO WORK!!
BECOME OJII-CHAN'S CHILDREN?

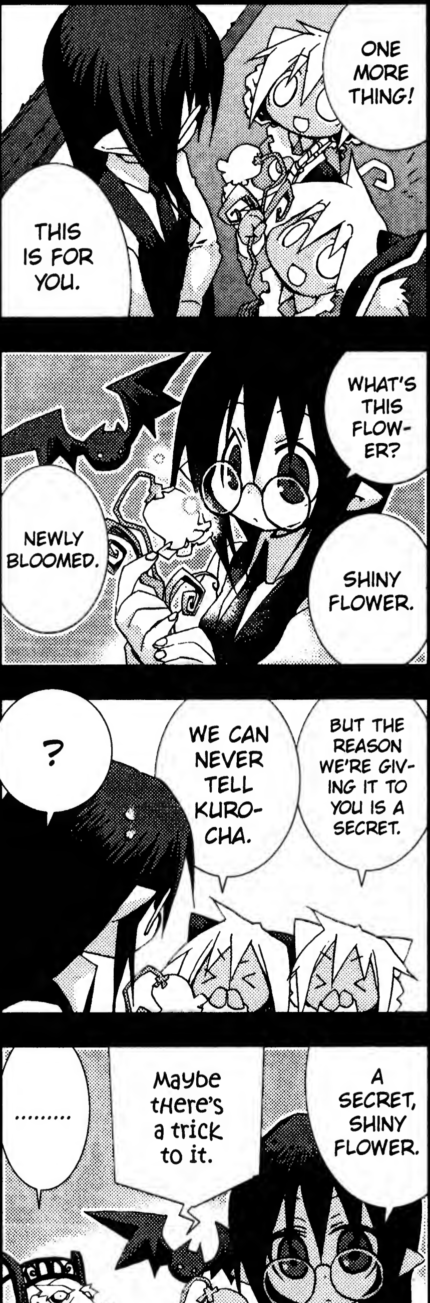

WE'RE GOING TO BE CHILDREN?
WHAT HAPPENS THEN?
YOU'LL LIVE WITH THAT OLD MAN HERE.
WITH KURO-CHA TOO?
No, we'll be separated.
THEN WE WON'T DO IT.
BECAUSE WE HAVE TO TRAVEL WITH KURO-CHAN...
...AND LOOK FOR PROFESSOR.
You're a little relieved but conflicted and a little disappointed, too?
SHUT UP.
But you're relieved, right?
since we've decided...
...let's tell the old man and get out of this village.
......
OJII-CHAN!
ガチャ
CLICK
!?
UGH...
What's wrong!?
ARE YOU OKAY?
UGH, MY ILLNESS...
I CAN'T BREATHE WHEN CHILDREN ARE AWAY FROM ME...
That's his next move, eh...
SNEAKY

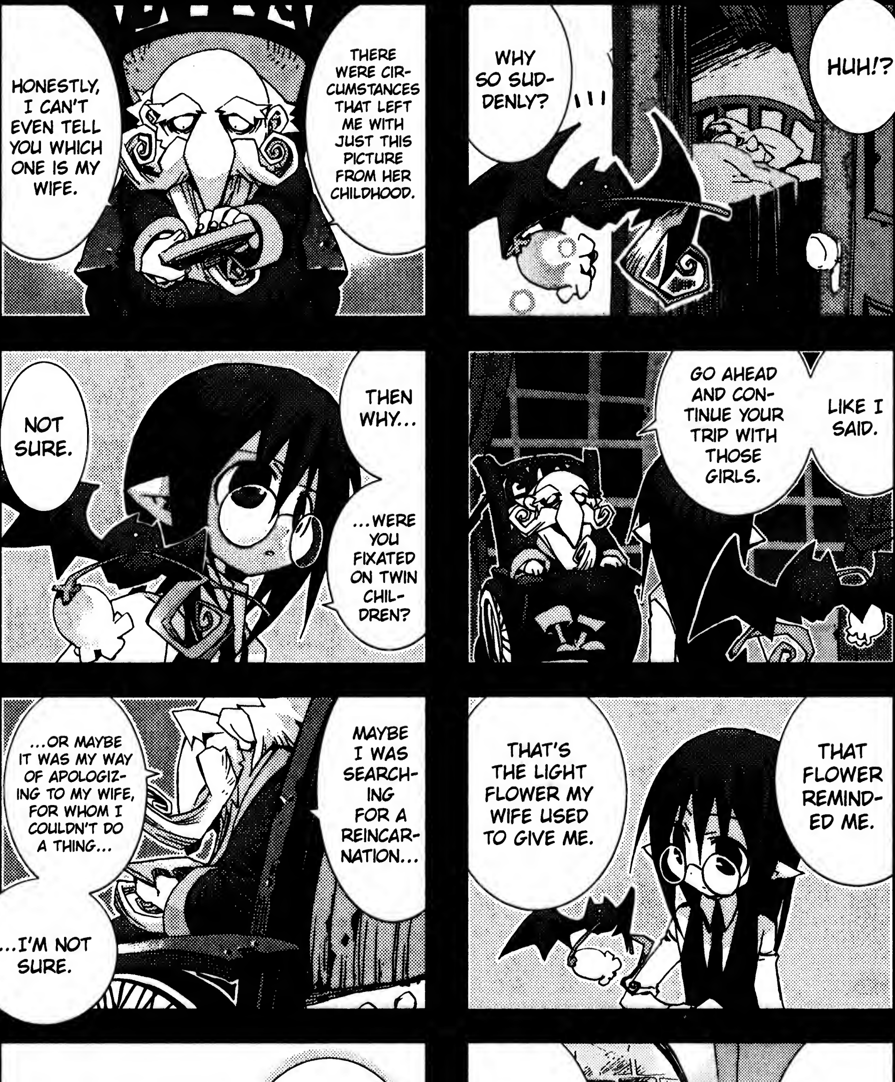

WELL, I KNEW WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO LEAVE SO EASILY.
Maybe He Heard US talking in the other room?
I'M SORRY TO DELAY YOUR TRAVEL.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
Those two believed your ridiculous story.
RIDICULOUS? THIS BURGHER SYNDROME IS REAL.
HERE WE GO AGAIN.
BLAB
BLAB
BLAB
I GOT INFECTED WHEN I WAS A SOLDIER ON THE BATTLEFIELD...
His stories are endless.
THE NAME OF THE DISEASE JUST CHANGED
THEN I'LL MAKE IT SHORT.
I THINK IT'S BECAUSE SOMEONE THREW A COFFIN AT ME.
I GUESS HE'S NEVER GOING TO STOP ATTACKING ME.
If you want to give Him the final blow, I'll help you.

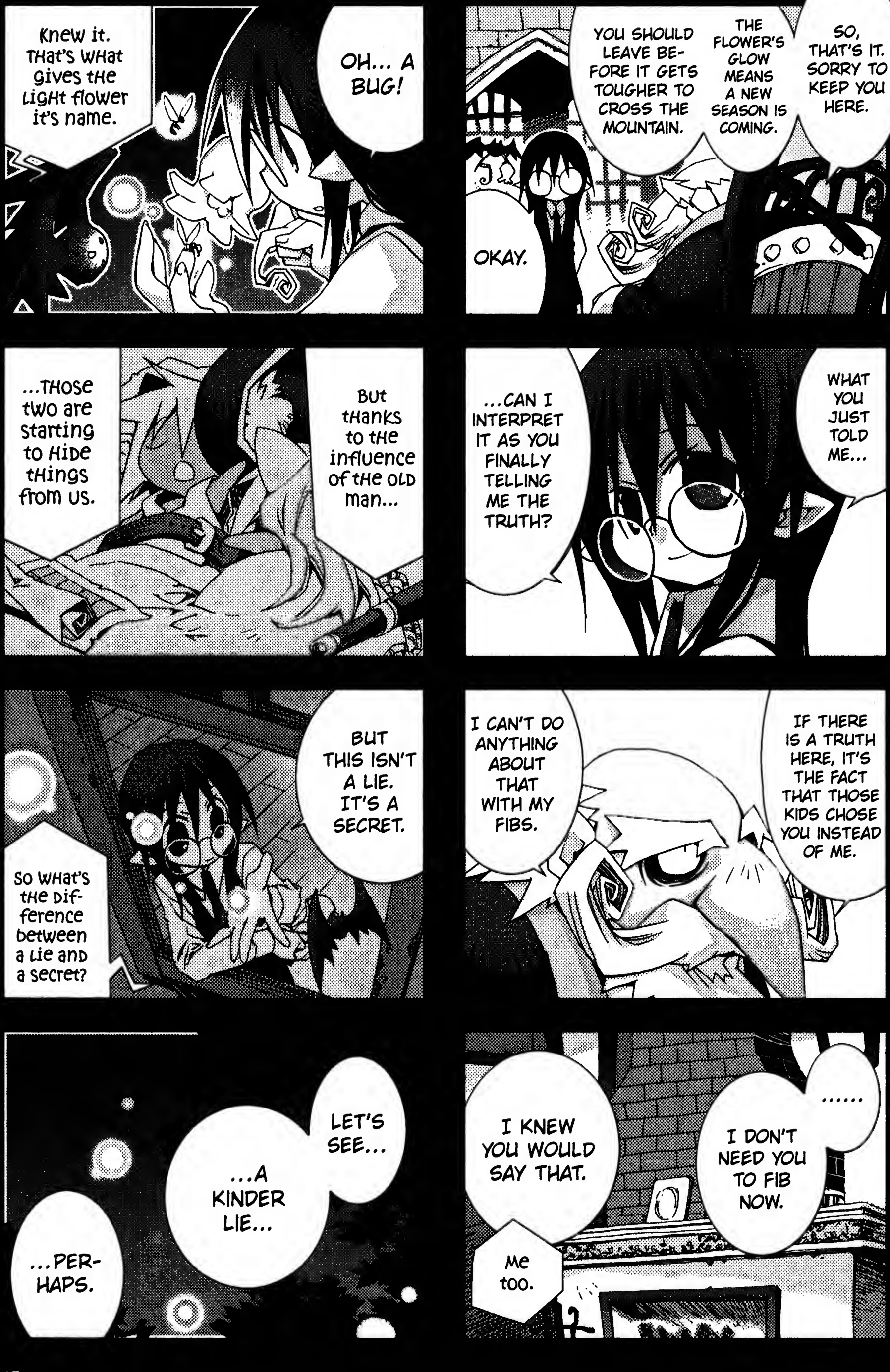

IT'S SHAPED LIKE THIS.
THIS WORKS WELL AGAINST SICKNESS.
IT'S REAAAAAAAAALLY BITTER.
SO IF YOU BITE ITS STEM, YOU CAN TELL.
OOH...
OOH...
I SEE.
THANK YOU FOR TELLING US.
NO PROBLEM.
GET A LOT OF THEM, OKAY?
I'LL MAKE MEDICINE THAT'S SO BITTER, IT'LL GET RID OF HIS FAKE ILLNESS WITH A SWIFT KICK!
OKAY!?
?
OKAY!!

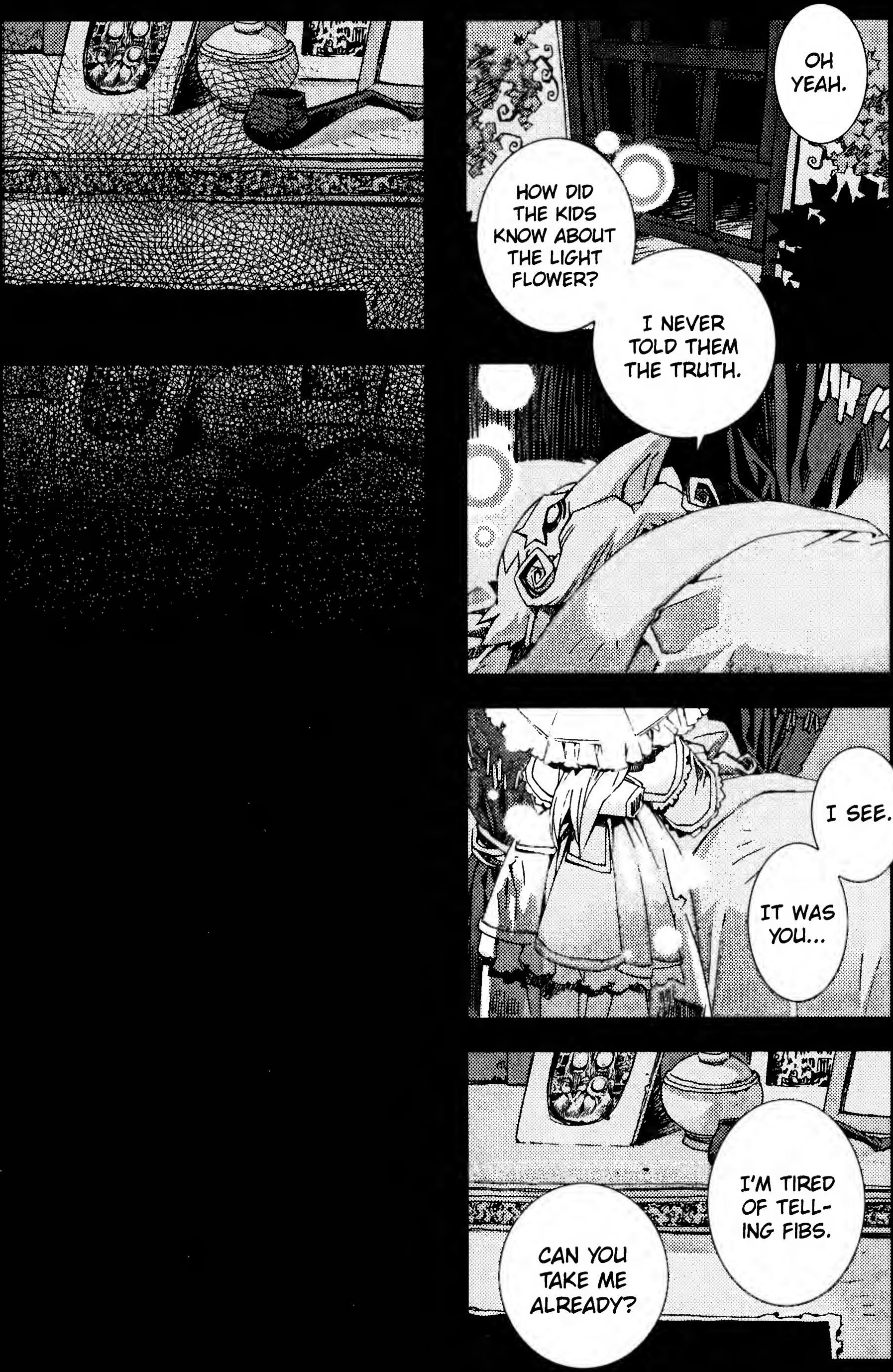

SO LET'S START OUR TREASURE HUNT!
YEAH!
HEY, NIJUKU.
I'M NOT NIJUKU. I'M CAPTAIN.
CAPTAIN, WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS IS?
WHAT? WHAT?
THIS. THIS.
IT'S A SHINY FLOWER.
YEAH.
DID WE REALLY FIND TREASURE?
THAT'S A LIGHT FLOWER.
LIGHT?
YOU FOUND IT FIRST.
FIRST?
RIGHT.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO GIVE A NEWLY BLOOMED LIGHT FLOWER TO THE PERSON YOU LIKE.
AND THEN YOU MAKE A WISH TO STAY WITH THAT PERSON FOREVER.
BUT YOU CAN'T TELL THAT PERSON...
...OR THE SPELL WILL BE BROKEN.
CAN'T?
CAN'T TELL?
YES, A SECRET.
YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR REAL FEELINGS A SECRET.

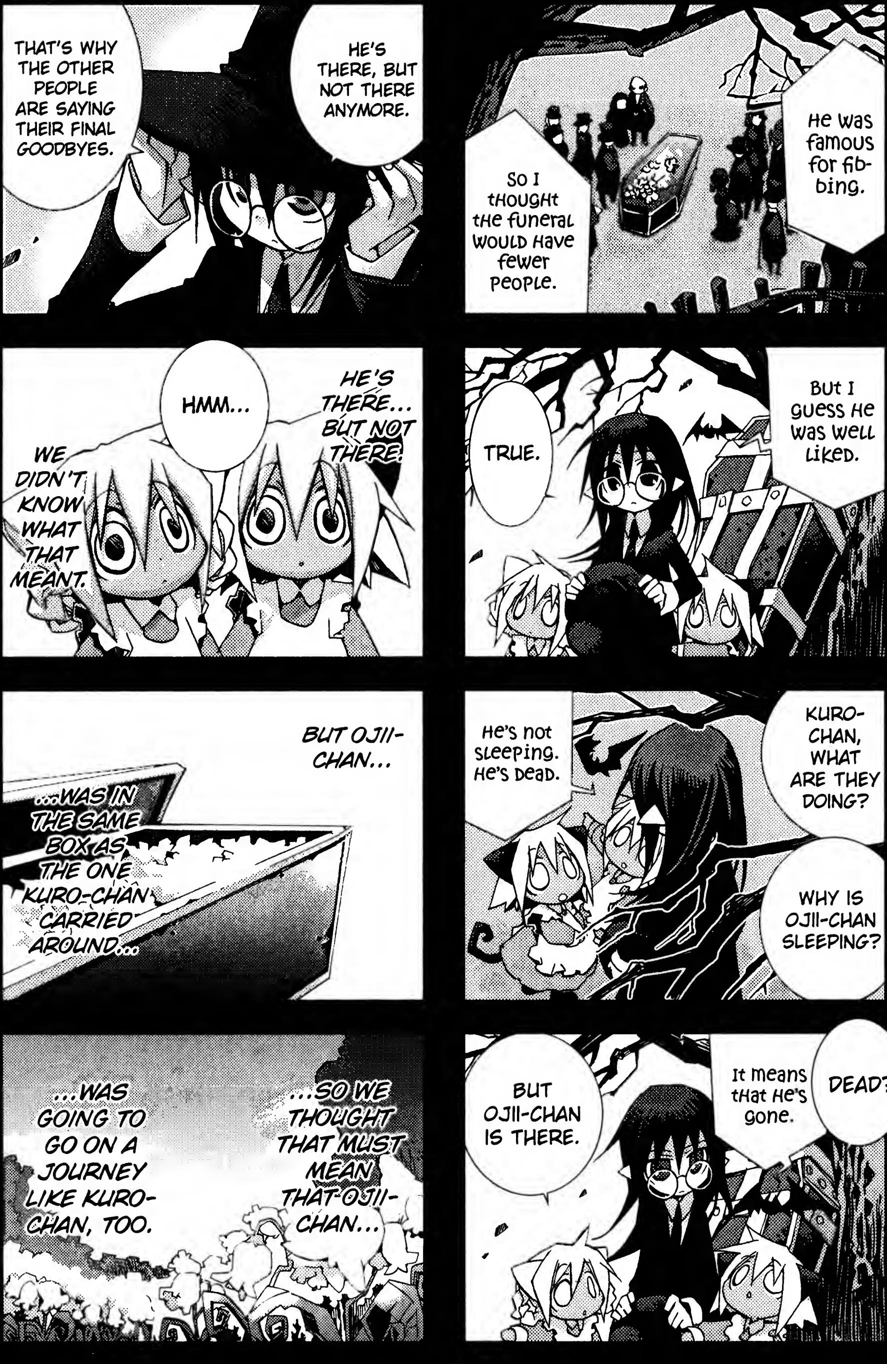

KURO-CHA, OKAERI.
No, "okaeri" is what we say.
WHAT ARE YOU DRESSED FOR?
TREASURE HUNT!
OH, a sophisticated game for you two.
SO DID YOU FIND ANYTHING?
WE FOUND A LOT OF MEDICINE!!
THOSE LEAVES !!
FLINCH
ACTUALLY, MY KING TOLD ME TO NEVER EAT ANYTHING GREEN AND BITTER, SO...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT.
I DON'T NEED BLATANT LIES.
So I guess his fake illness was common.

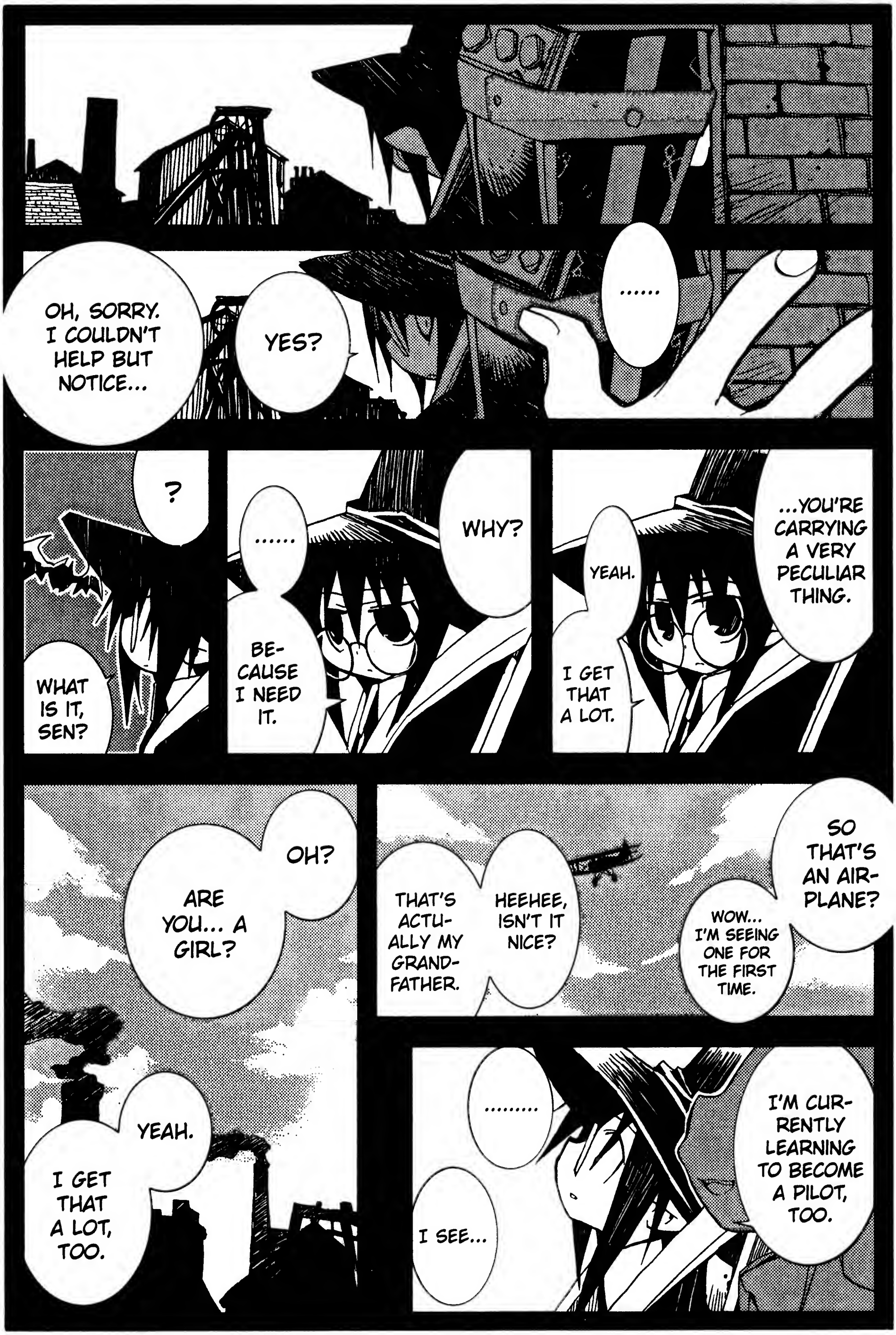

ONE MORE THING!
THIS IS FOR YOU.
WHAT'S THIS FLOWER?
SHINY FLOWER.
NEWLY BLOOMED.
BUT THE REASON WE'RE GIVING IT TO YOU IS A SECRET.
WE CAN NEVER TELL KURO-CHA.
?
A SECRET, SHINY FLOWER.
Maybe there's a trick to it.
.........

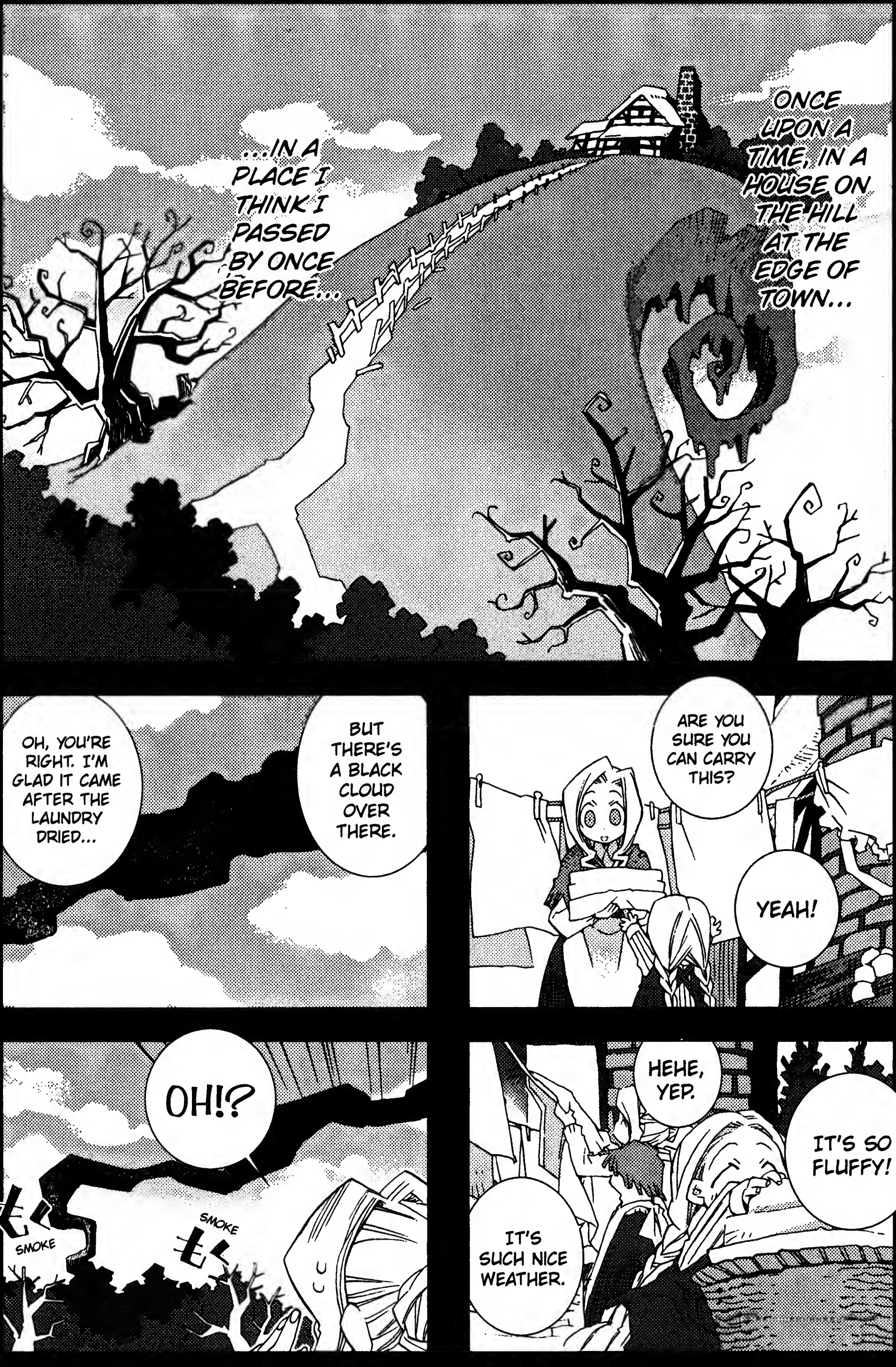

HUH!?
WHY SO SUDDENLY?
LIKE I SAID.
GO AHEAD AND CONTINUE YOUR TRIP WITH THOSE GIRLS.
THAT FLOWER REMINDED ME.
THAT'S THE LIGHT FLOWER MY WIFE USED TO GIVE ME.
I NEVER HAD TWIN DAUGHTERS.
THIS IS A PICTURE OF MY WIFE WHO DIED EARLY.
THERE WERE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LEFT ME WITH JUST THIS PICTURE FROM HER CHILDHOOD.
HONESTLY, I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU WHICH ONE IS MY WIFE.
THEN WHY...
...WERE YOU FIXATED ON TWIN CHILDREN?
NOT SURE.
MAYBE I WAS SEARCHING FOR A REINCARNATION...
...OR MAYBE IT WAS MY WAY OF APOLOGIZING TO MY WIFE, FOR WHOM I COULDN'T DO A THING...
...I'M NOT SURE.
I CONTINUED TO LIE...
...SO I DON'T REMEMBER MY TRUE FEELINGS.

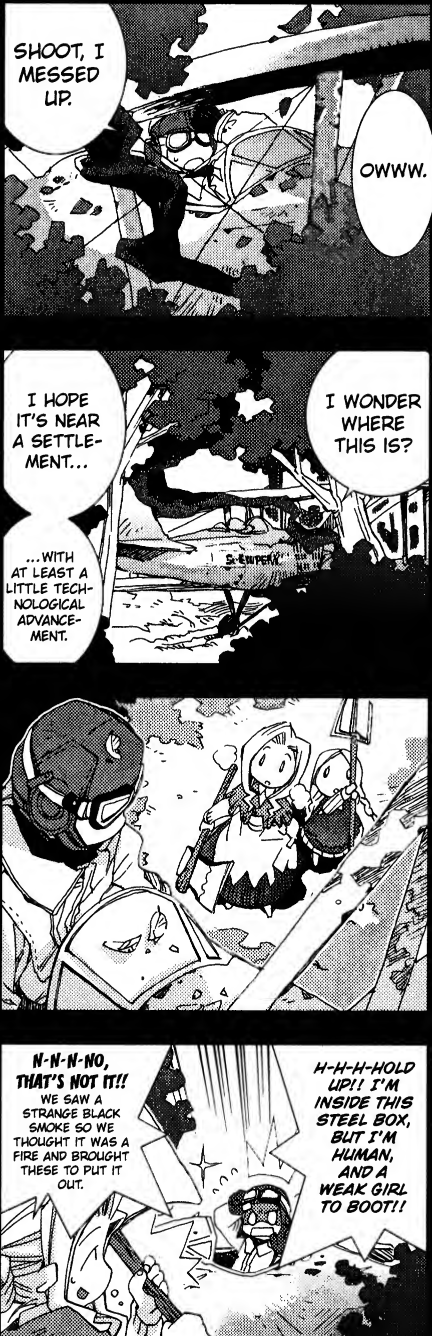

SO, THAT'S IT. SORRY TO KEEP YOU HERE.
THE FLOWER'S GLOW MEANS A NEW SEASON IS COMING.
YOU SHOULD LEAVE BEFORE IT GETS TOUGHER TO CROSS THE MOUNTAIN.
OKAY.
OH... A BUG!
Knew it. That's what gives the light flower it's name.
WHAT YOU JUST TOLD ME...
...CAN I INTERPRET IT AS YOU FINALLY TELLING ME THE TRUTH?
But thanks to the influence of the old man...
...those two are starting to hide things from us.
IF THERE IS A TRUTH HERE, IT'S THE FACT THAT THOSE KIDS CHOSE YOU INSTEAD OF ME.
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT WITH MY FIBS.
BUT THIS ISN'T A LIE. IT'S A SECRET.
So what's the difference between a lie and a secret?
......
I DON'T NEED YOU TO FIB NOW.
I KNEW YOU WOULD SAY THAT.
Me too.
LET'S SEE...
...A KINDER LIE...
...PERHAPS.

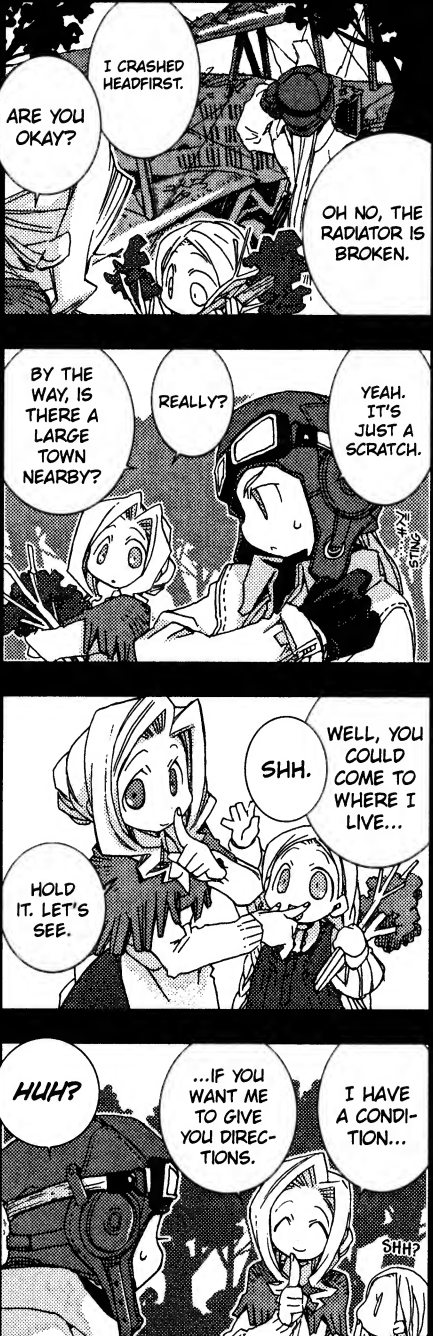

OH YEAH.
HOW DID THE KIDS KNOW ABOUT THE LIGHT FLOWER?
I NEVER TOLD THEM THE TRUTH.
I SEE.
IT WAS YOU...
I'M TIRED OF TELLING FIBS.
CAN YOU TAKE ME ALREADY?

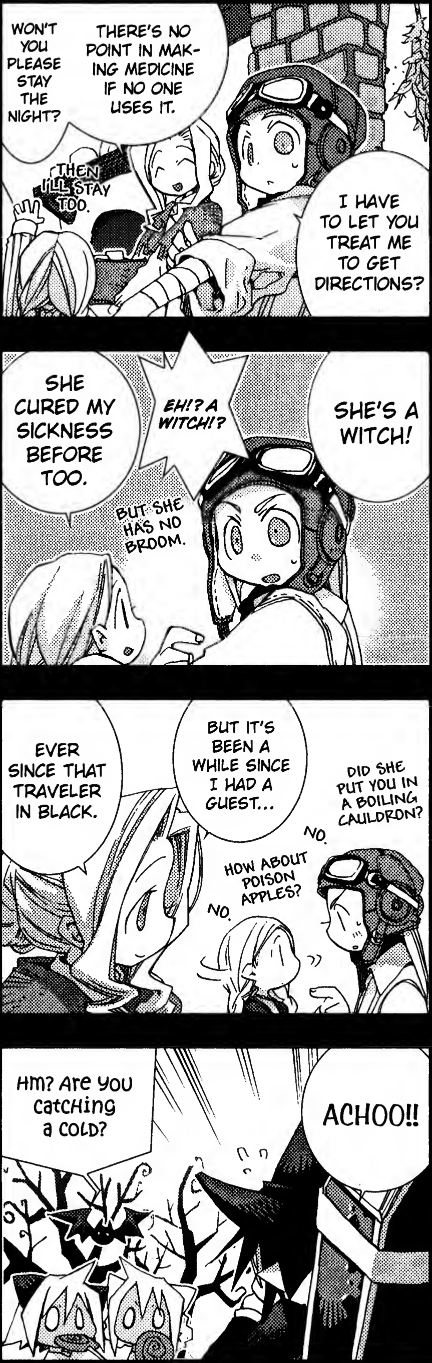

He was famous for fibbing.
So I thought the funeral would have fewer people.
But I guess he was well liked.
TRUE.
KURO-CHAN, WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
WHY IS OJII-CHAN SLEEPING?
He's not sleeping. He's dead.
DEAD?
It means that he's gone.
BUT OJII-CHAN IS THERE.
HE'S THERE, BUT NOT THERE ANYMORE.
THAT'S WHY THE OTHER PEOPLE ARE SAYING THEIR FINAL GOODBYES.
HMM...
HE'S THERE... BUT NOT THERE.
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANT.
BUT OJII-CHAN...
...WAS IN THE SAME BOX AS THE ONE KURO-CHAN CARRIED AROUND...
...SO WE THOUGHT THAT MUST MEAN THAT OJII-CHAN...
...WAS GOING TO GO ON A JOURNEY LIKE KURO-CHAN, TOO.

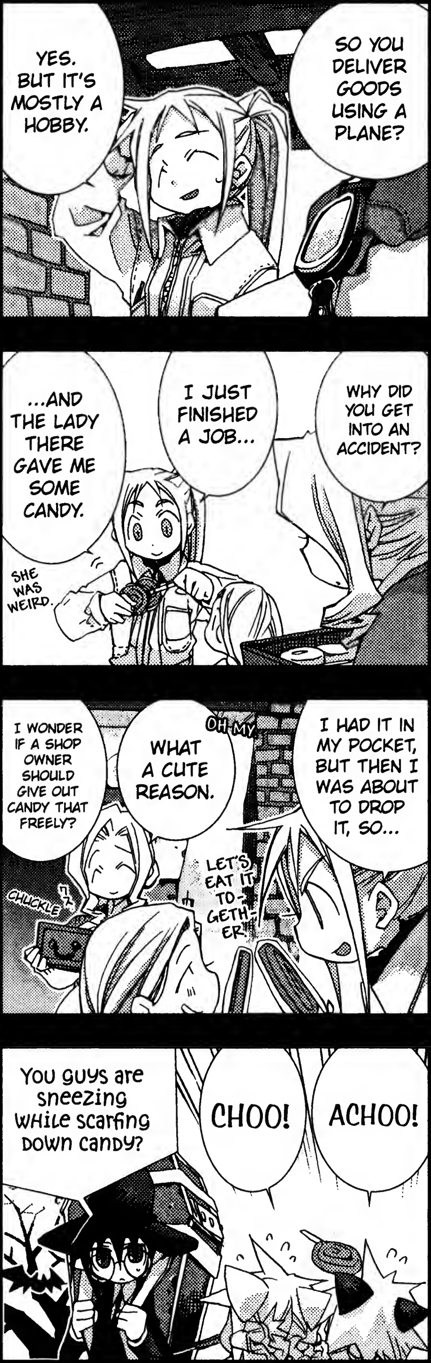

......
YES?
OH, SORRY. I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE...
...YOU'RE CARRYING A VERY PECULIAR THING.
YEAH.
I GET THAT A LOT.
WHY?
......
BECAUSE I NEED IT.
?
WHAT IS IT, SEN?
SO THAT'S AN AIRPLANE?
WOW... I'M SEEING ONE FOR THE FIRST TIME.
HEEHEE, ISN'T IT NICE?
THAT'S ACTUALLY MY GRANDFATHER.
I'M CURRENTLY LEARNING TO BECOME A PILOT, TOO.
.........
I SEE...
OH?
ARE YOU... A GIRL?
YEAH.
I GET THAT A LOT, TOO.

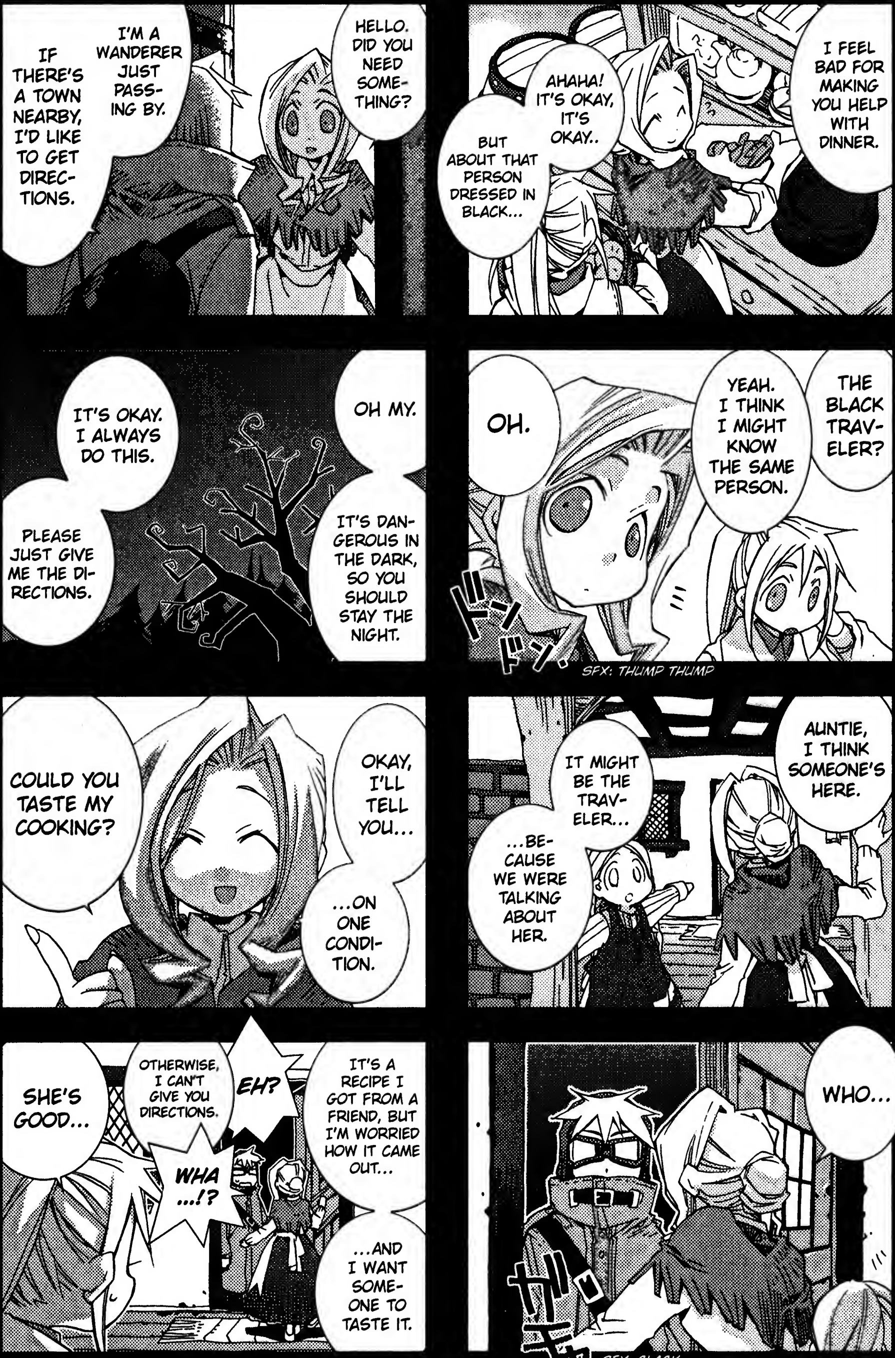

ONCE UPON A TIME, IN A HOUSE ON THE HILL AT THE EDGE OF TOWN...
...IN A PLACE I THINK I PASSED BY ONCE BEFORE...
ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN CARRY THIS?
YEAH!
HEHE, YEP.
IT'S SO FLUFFY!
IT'S SUCH NICE WEATHER.
BUT THERE'S A BLACK CLOUD OVER THERE.
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M GLAD IT CAME AFTER THE LAUNDRY DRIED...
OH!?
SMOKE
SMOKE

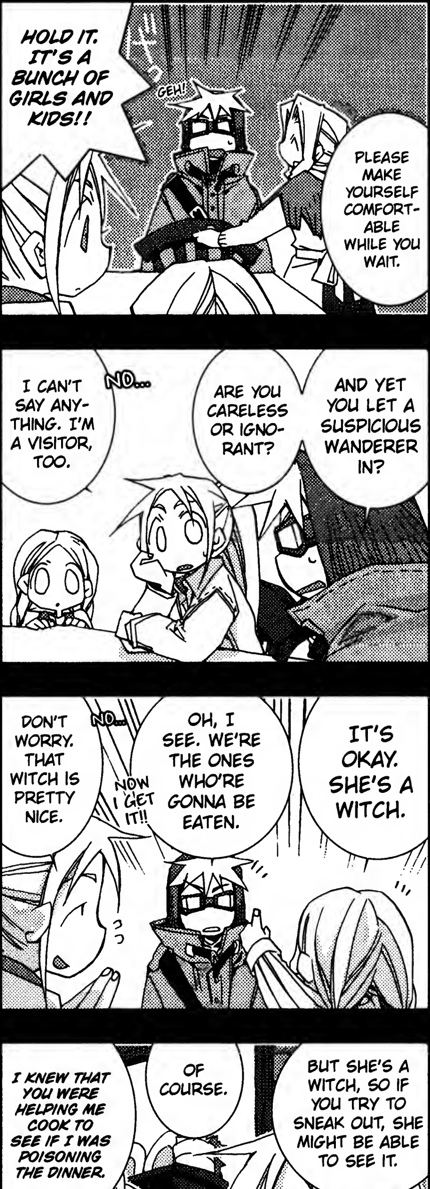

OWWW.
SHOOT, I MESSED UP.
I WONDER WHERE THIS IS?
I HOPE IT'S NEAR A SETTLEMENT...
...WITH AT LEAST A LITTLE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT.
H-H-H-HOLD UP!! I'M INSIDE THIS STEEL BOX, BUT I'M HUMAN, AND A WEAK GIRL TO BOOT!!
N-N-N-NO, THAT'S NOT IT!! WE SAW A STRANGE BLACK SMOKE SO WE THOUGHT IT WAS A FIRE AND BROUGHT THESE TO PUT IT OUT.

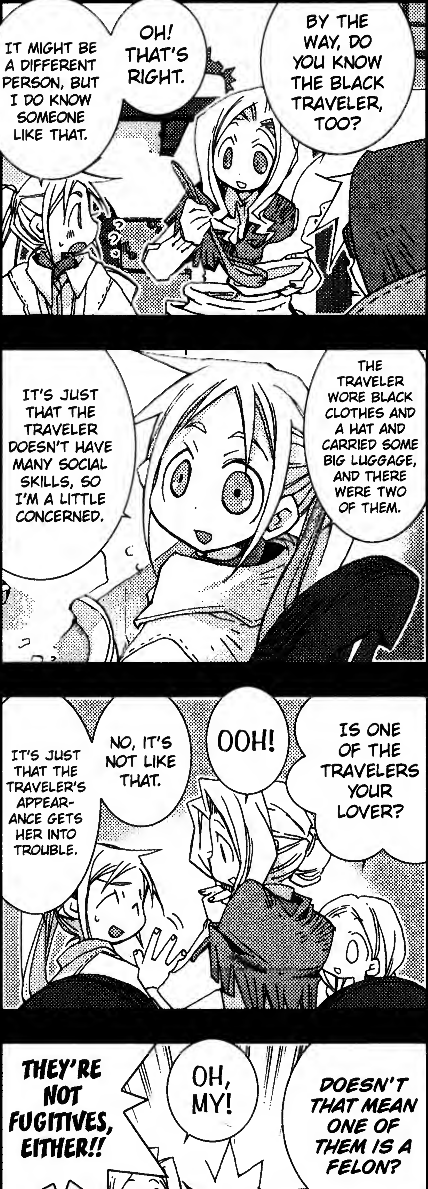

OH NO, THE RADIATOR IS BROKEN.
I CRASHED HEADFIRST.
ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH. IT'S JUST A SCRATCH.
STING
REALLY?
BY THE WAY, IS THERE A LARGE TOWN NEARBY?
WELL, YOU COULD COME TO WHERE I LIVE...
SHH.
HOLD IT. LET'S SEE.
I HAVE A CONDITION...
...IF YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS.
SHH?
HUH?

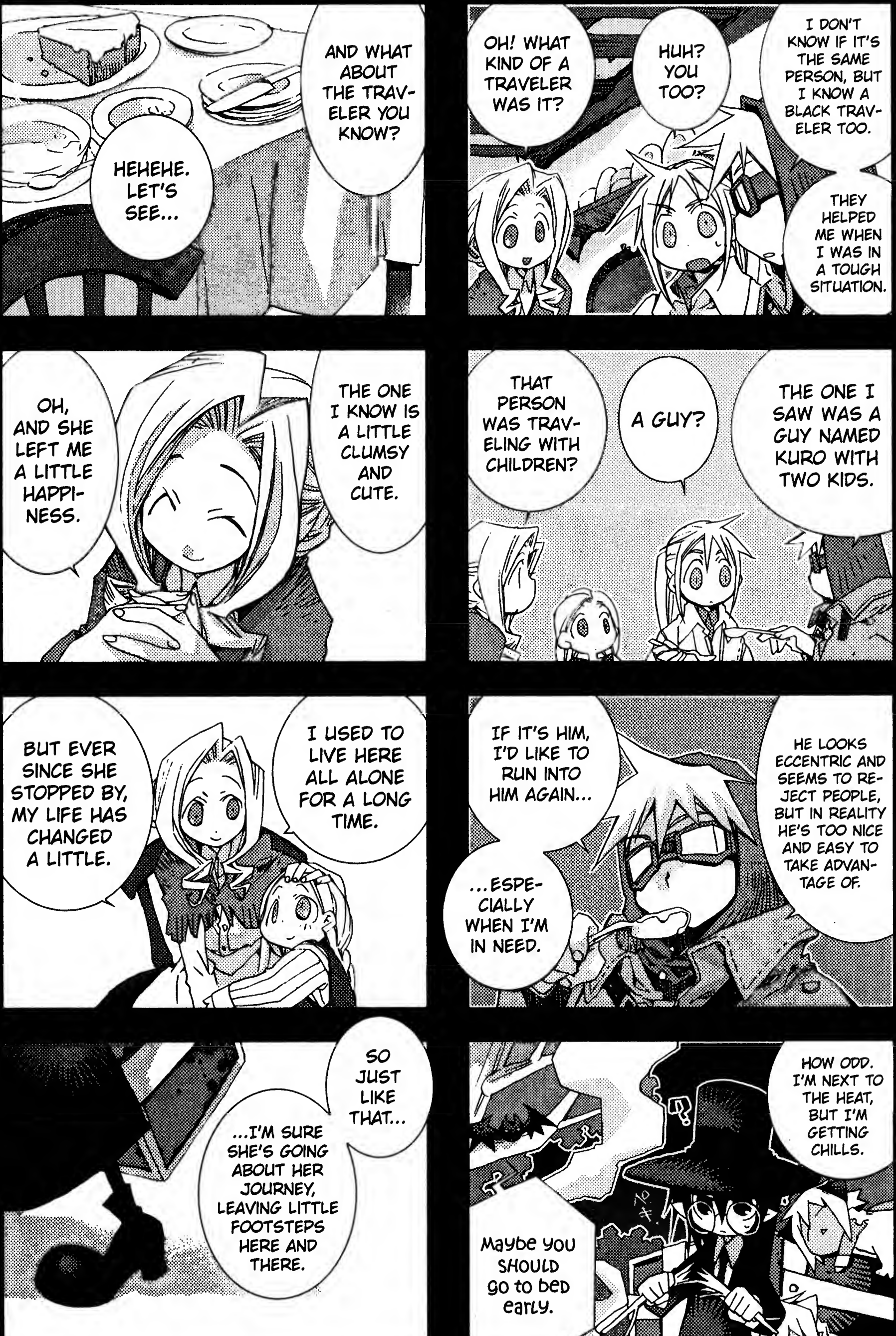

THERE'S NO POINT IN MAKING MEDICINE IF NO ONE USES IT.
WON'T YOU PLEASE STAY THE NIGHT?
I HAVE TO LET YOU TREAT ME TO GET DIRECTIONS?
THEN I'LL STAY TOO.
SHE'S A WITCH!
EH!? A WITCH!?
SHE CURED MY SICKNESS BEFORE TOO.
BUT SHE HAS NO BROOM.
DID SHE PUT YOU IN A BOILING CAULDRON?
NO.
BUT IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I HAD A GUEST...
HOW ABOUT POISON APPLES?
NO.
EVER SINCE THAT TRAVELER IN BLACK.
ACHOO!!
Hm? Are you catching a cold?


SO YOU DELIVER GOODS USING A PLANE?
YES. BUT IT'S MOSTLY A HOBBY.
WHY DID YOU GET INTO AN ACCIDENT?
I JUST FINISHED A JOB...
...AND THE LADY THERE GAVE ME SOME CANDY.
SHE WAS WEIRD.
I HAD IT IN MY POCKET, BUT THEN I WAS ABOUT TO DROP IT, SO...
LET'S EAT IT TO-GETHER.
OH MY.
WHAT A CUTE REASON.
I WONDER IF A SHOP OWNER SHOULD GIVE OUT CANDY THAT FREELY?
CHUCKLE
ACHOO!
CHOO!
You guys are sneezing while scarfing down candy?

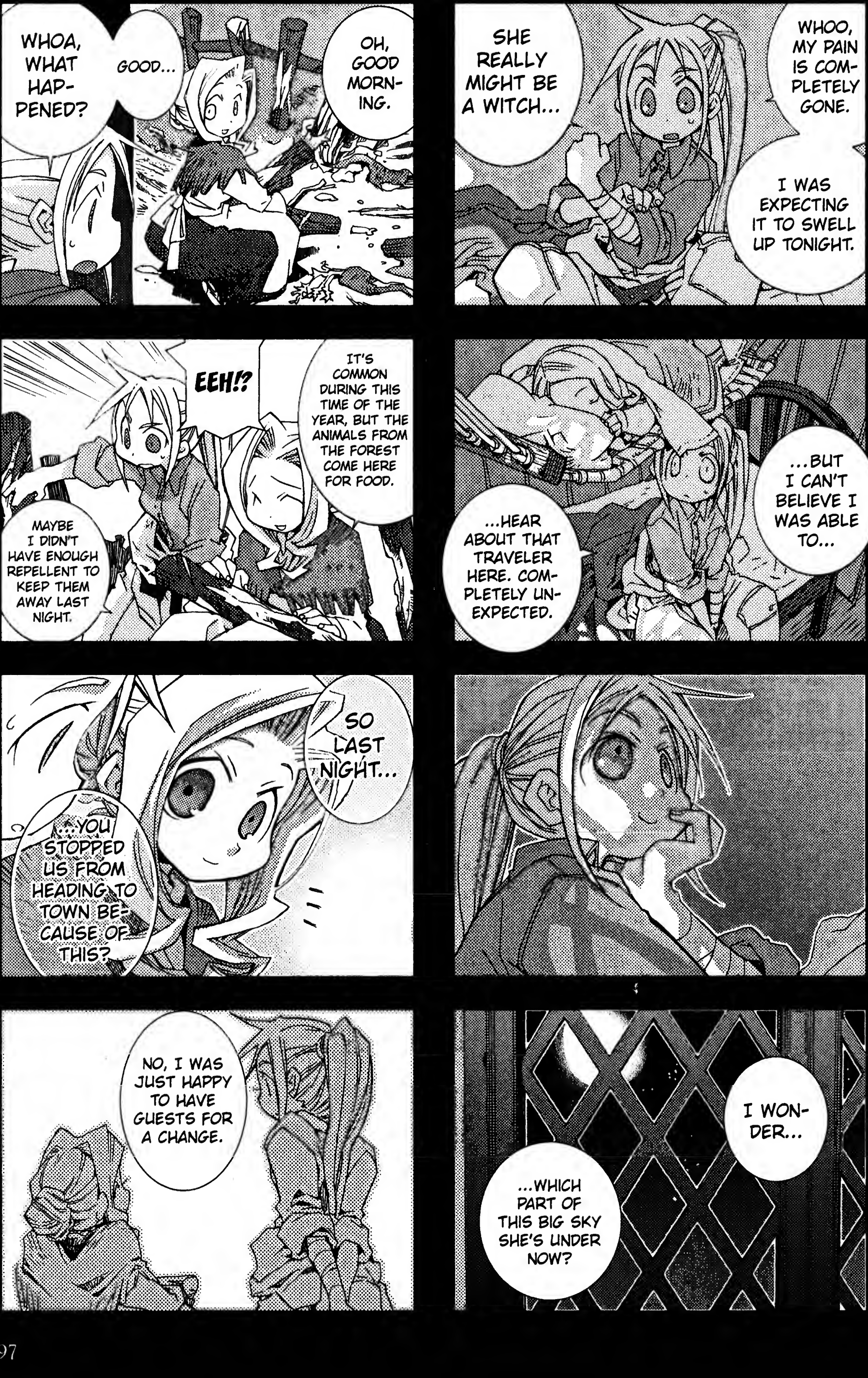

I FEEL BAD FOR MAKING YOU HELP WITH DINNER.
AHAHA! IT'S OKAY, IT'S OKAY..
BUT ABOUT THAT PERSON DRESSED IN BLACK...
THE BLACK TRAVELER?
YEAH. I THINK I MIGHT KNOW THE SAME PERSON.
OH.
SFX: THUMP THUMP
AUNTIE, I THINK SOMEONE'S HERE.
IT MIGHT BE THE TRAVELER...
...BECAUSE WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HER.
WHO...
SFX: CLACK
HELLO. DID YOU NEED SOMETHING?
I'M A WANDERER JUST PASSING BY.
IF THERE'S A TOWN NEARBY, I'D LIKE TO GET DIRECTIONS.
OH MY.
IT'S DANGEROUS IN THE DARK, SO YOU SHOULD STAY THE NIGHT.
IT'S OKAY. I ALWAYS DO THIS.
PLEASE JUST GIVE ME THE DIRECTIONS.
OKAY, I'LL TELL YOU...
...ON ONE CONDITION.
COULD YOU TASTE MY COOKING?
IT'S A RECIPE I GOT FROM A FRIEND, BUT I'M WORRIED HOW IT CAME OUT...
...AND I WANT SOMEONE TO TASTE IT.
EH?
OTHERWISE, I CAN'T GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS.
WHA...!?
SHE'S GOOD...

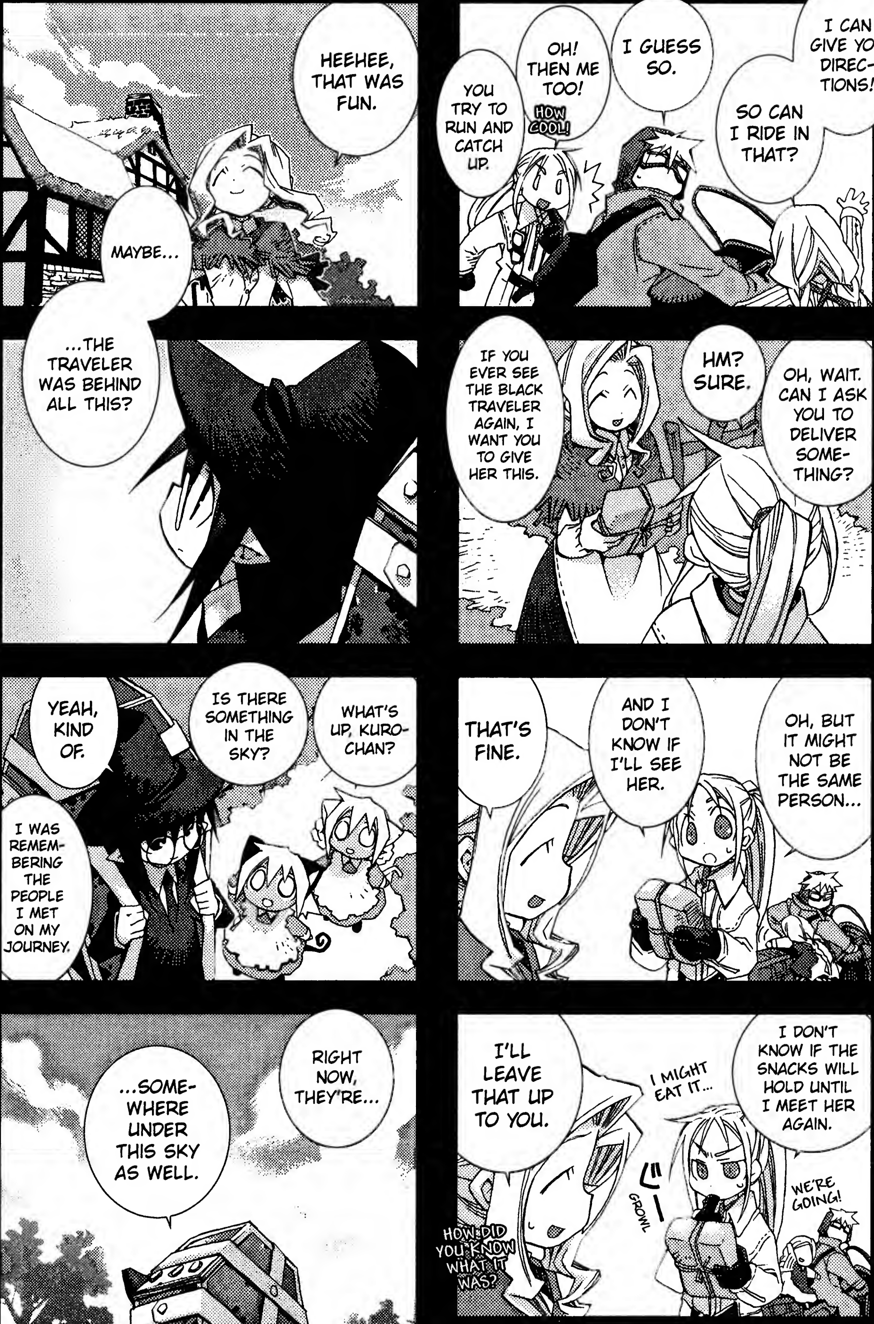

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE WHILE YOU WAIT.
GEH!
HOLD IT. IT'S A BUNCH OF GIRLS AND KIDS!!
AND YET YOU LET A SUSPICIOUS WANDERER IN?
ARE YOU CARELESS OR IGNORANT?
NO...
I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING. I'M A VISITOR, TOO.
IT'S OKAY. SHE'S A WITCH.
OH, I SEE. WE'RE THE ONES WHO'RE GONNA BE EATEN.
NOW I GET IT!!
NO...
DON'T WORRY. THAT WITCH IS PRETTY NICE.
BUT SHE'S A WITCH, SO IF YOU TRY TO SNEAK OUT, SHE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE IT.
OF COURSE.
I KNEW THAT YOU WERE HELPING ME COOK TO SEE IF I WAS POISONING THE DINNER.

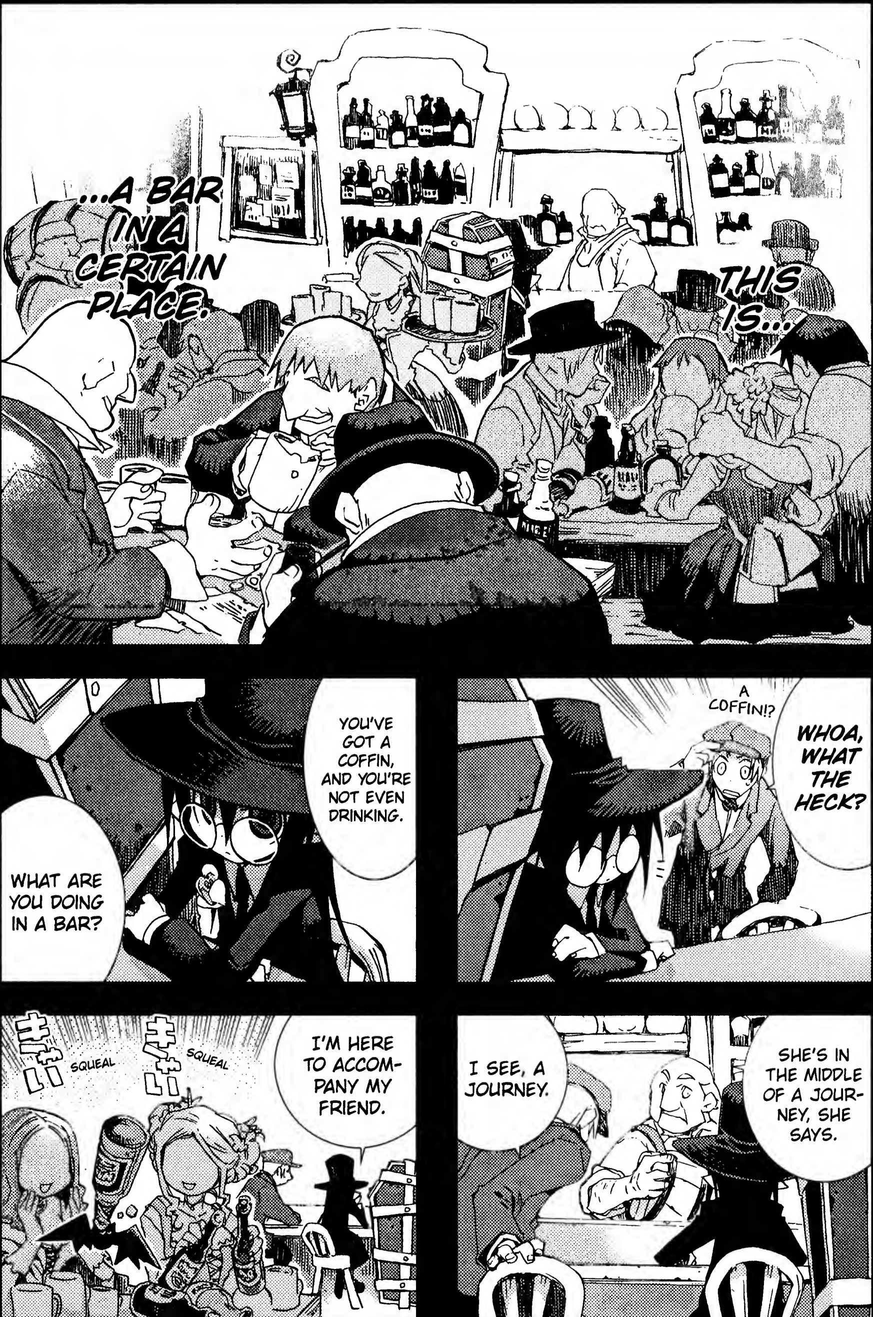

BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW THE BLACK TRAVELER, TOO?
OH! THAT'S RIGHT.
IT MIGHT BE A DIFFERENT PERSON, BUT I DO KNOW SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
THE TRAVELER WORE BLACK CLOTHES AND A HAT AND CARRIED SOME BIG LUGGAGE, AND THERE WERE TWO OF THEM.
IT'S JUST THAT THE TRAVELER DOESN'T HAVE MANY SOCIAL SKILLS, SO I'M A LITTLE CONCERNED.
IS ONE OF THE TRAVELERS YOUR LOVER?
OOH!
NO, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
IT'S JUST THAT THE TRAVELER'S APPEARANCE GETS HER INTO TROUBLE.
DOESN'T THAT MEAN ONE OF THEM IS A FELON?
OH, MY!
THEY'RE NOT FUGITIVES, EITHER!!

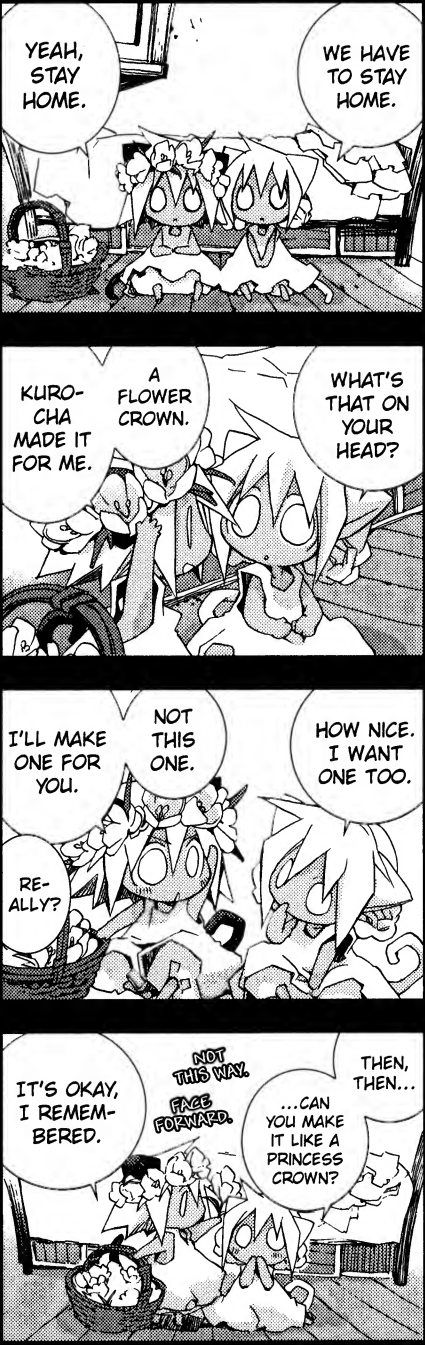

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE SAME PERSON, BUT I KNOW A BLACK TRAVELER TOO.
THEY HELPED ME WHEN I WAS IN A TOUGH SITUATION.
HUH? YOU TOO?
OH! WHAT KIND OF A TRAVELER WAS IT?
THE ONE I SAW WAS A GUY NAMED KURO WITH TWO KIDS.
A GUY?
THAT PERSON WAS TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN?
HE LOOKS ECCENTRIC AND SEEMS TO REJECT PEOPLE, BUT IN REALITY HE'S TOO NICE AND EASY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF.
IF IT'S HIM, I'D LIKE TO RUN INTO HIM AGAIN...
...ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M IN NEED.
HOW ODD. I'M NEXT TO THE HEAT, BUT I'M GETTING CHILLS.
Maybe you should go to bed early.
AND WHAT ABOUT THE TRAVELER YOU KNOW?
HEHEHE. LET'S SEE...
THE ONE I KNOW IS A LITTLE CLUMSY AND CUTE.
OH, AND SHE LEFT ME A LITTLE HAPPINESS.
I USED TO LIVE HERE ALL ALONE FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT EVER SINCE SHE STOPPED BY, MY LIFE HAS CHANGED A LITTLE.
SO JUST LIKE THAT...
...I'M SURE SHE'S GOING ABOUT HER JOURNEY, LEAVING LITTLE FOOTSTEPS HERE AND THERE.

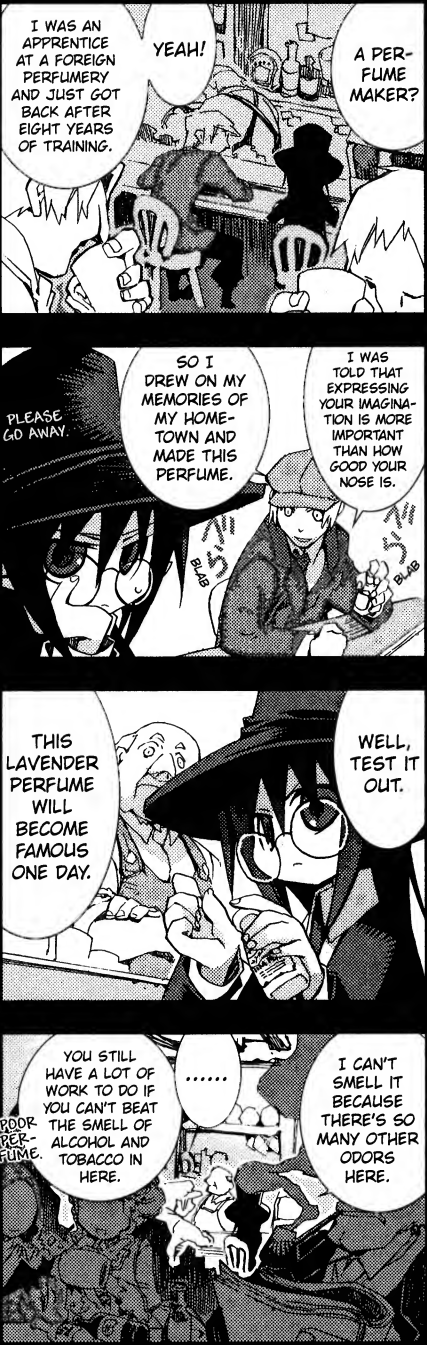
SFX: CRACK

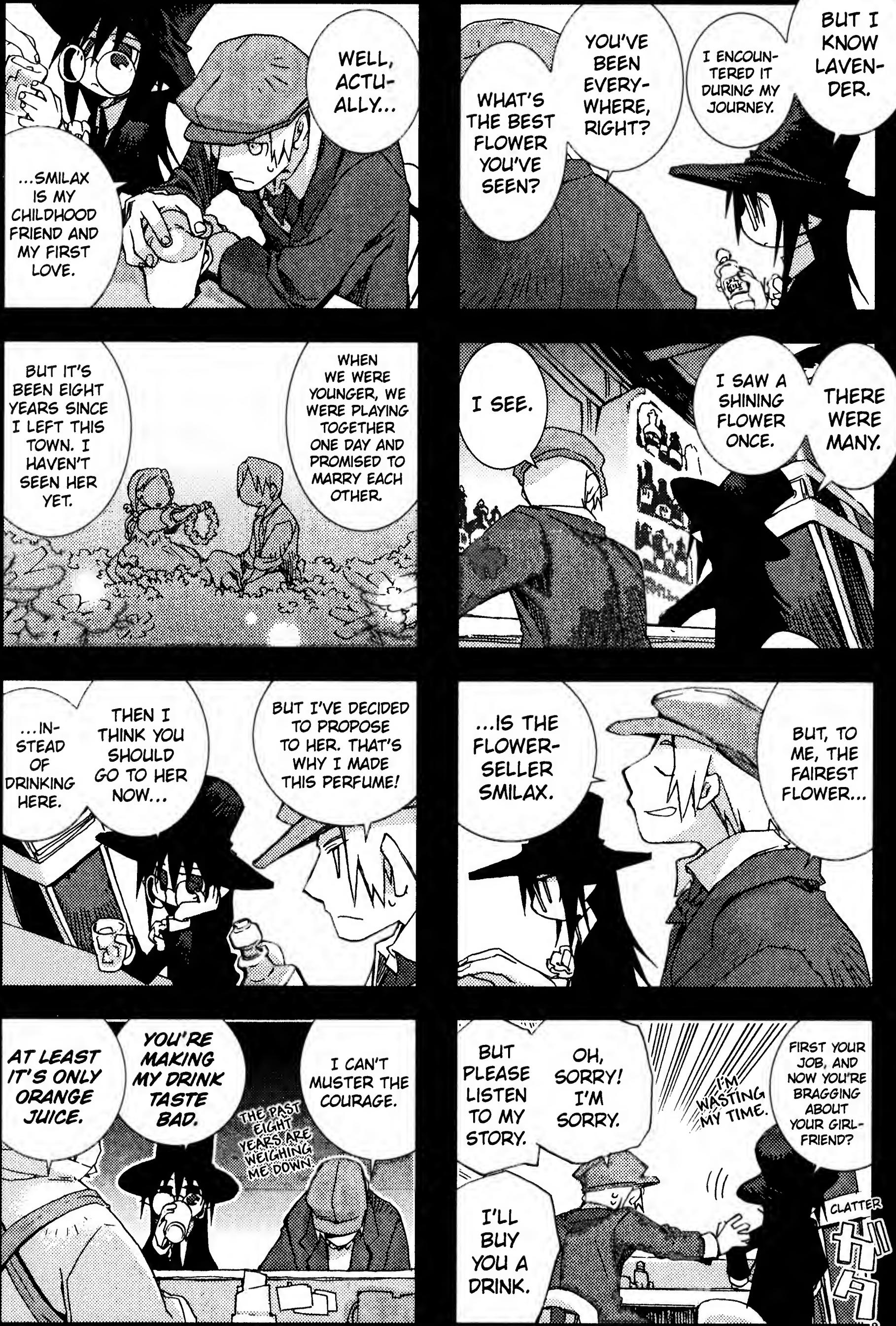

WHOO, MY PAIN IS COMPLETELY GONE.
I WAS EXPECTING IT TO SWELL UP TONIGHT.
SHE REALLY MIGHT BE A WITCH...
...BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE I WAS ABLE TO...
...HEAR ABOUT THAT TRAVELER HERE. COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED.
I WONDER...
...WHICH PART OF THIS BIG SKY SHE'S UNDER NOW?
OH, GOOD MORNING.
GOOD...
WHOA, WHAT HAPPENED?
IT'S COMMON DURING THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, BUT THE ANIMALS FROM THE FOREST COME HERE FOR FOOD.
EEH!?
MAYBE I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH REPELLENT TO KEEP THEM AWAY LAST NIGHT.
SO LAST NIGHT...
...YOU STOPPED US FROM HEADING TO TOWN BECAUSE OF THIS?
NO, I WAS JUST HAPPY TO HAVE GUESTS FOR A CHANGE.

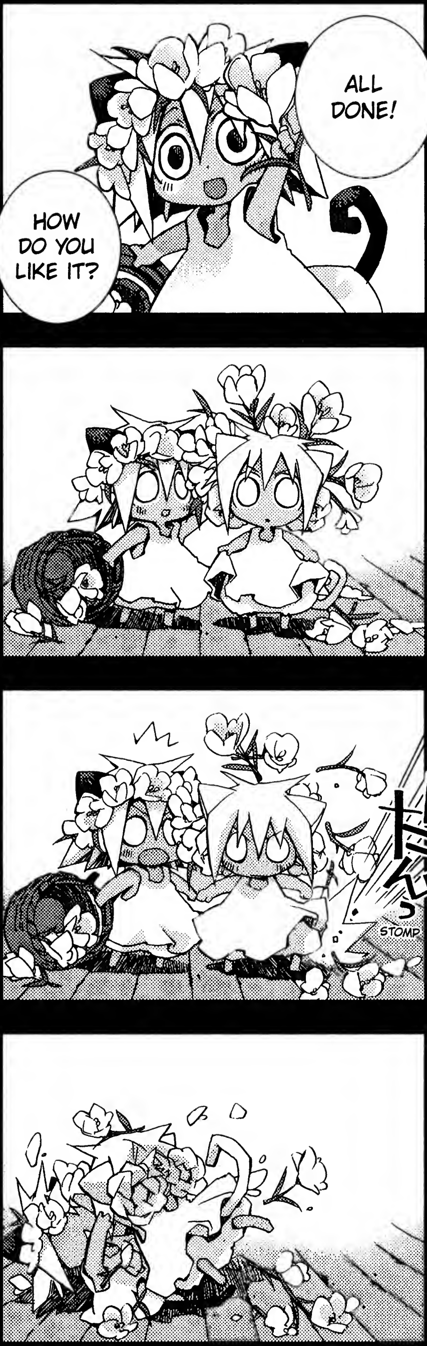

I CAN GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS!
SO CAN I RIDE IN THAT?
I GUESS SO.
OH! THEN ME TOO!
HOW COOL!
YOU TRY TO RUN AND CATCH UP.
OH, WAIT. CAN I ASK YOU TO DELIVER SOMETHING?
HM? SURE.
IF YOU EVER SEE THE BLACK TRAVELER AGAIN, I WANT YOU TO GIVE HER THIS.
OH, BUT IT MIGHT NOT BE THE SAME PERSON...
AND I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL SEE HER.
THAT'S FINE.
I DON'T KNOW IF THE SNACKS WILL HOLD UNTIL I MEET HER AGAIN.
I MIGHT EAT IT...
I'LL LEAVE THAT UP TO YOU.
WE'RE GOING!
じー
GROWL
HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT IT WAS?
HEEHEE, THAT WAS FUN.
MAYBE...
...THE TRAVELER WAS BEHIND ALL THIS?
WHAT'S UP, KURO-CHAN?
IS THERE SOMETHING IN THE SKY?
YEAH, KIND OF.
I WAS REMEMBERING THE PEOPLE I MET ON MY JOURNEY.
RIGHT NOW, THEY'RE...
...SOMEWHERE UNDER THIS SKY AS WELL.

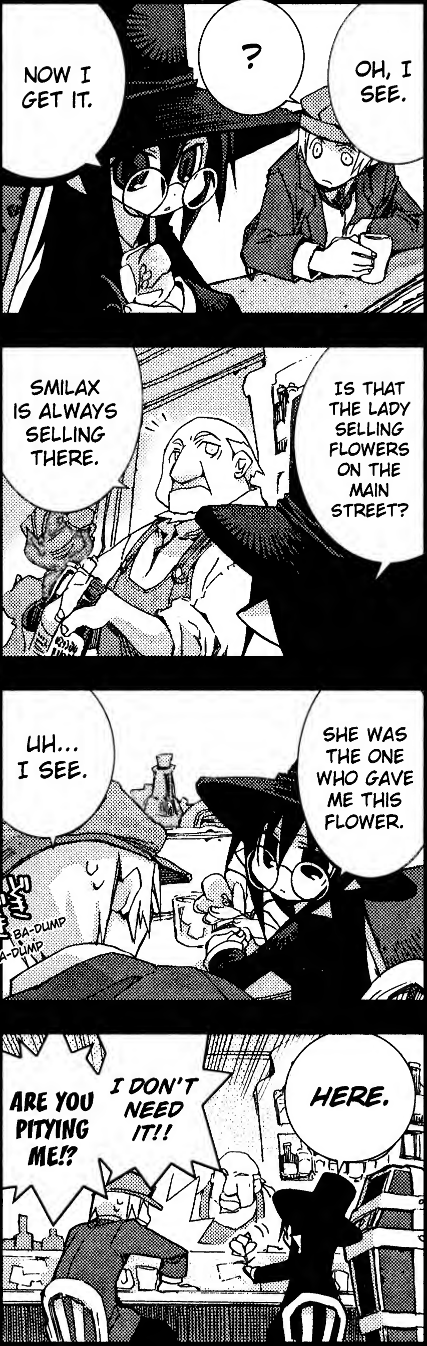

THIS IS...
...A BAR IN A CERTAIN PLACE.
WHOA, WHAT THE HECK?
A COFFIN!?
YOU'VE GOT A COFFIN, AND YOU'RE NOT EVEN DRINKING.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A BAR?
SHE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF A JOURNEY, SHE SAYS.
I SEE, A JOURNEY.
I'M HERE TO ACCOMPANY MY FRIEND.
キャい SQUEAL
キャい SQUEAL

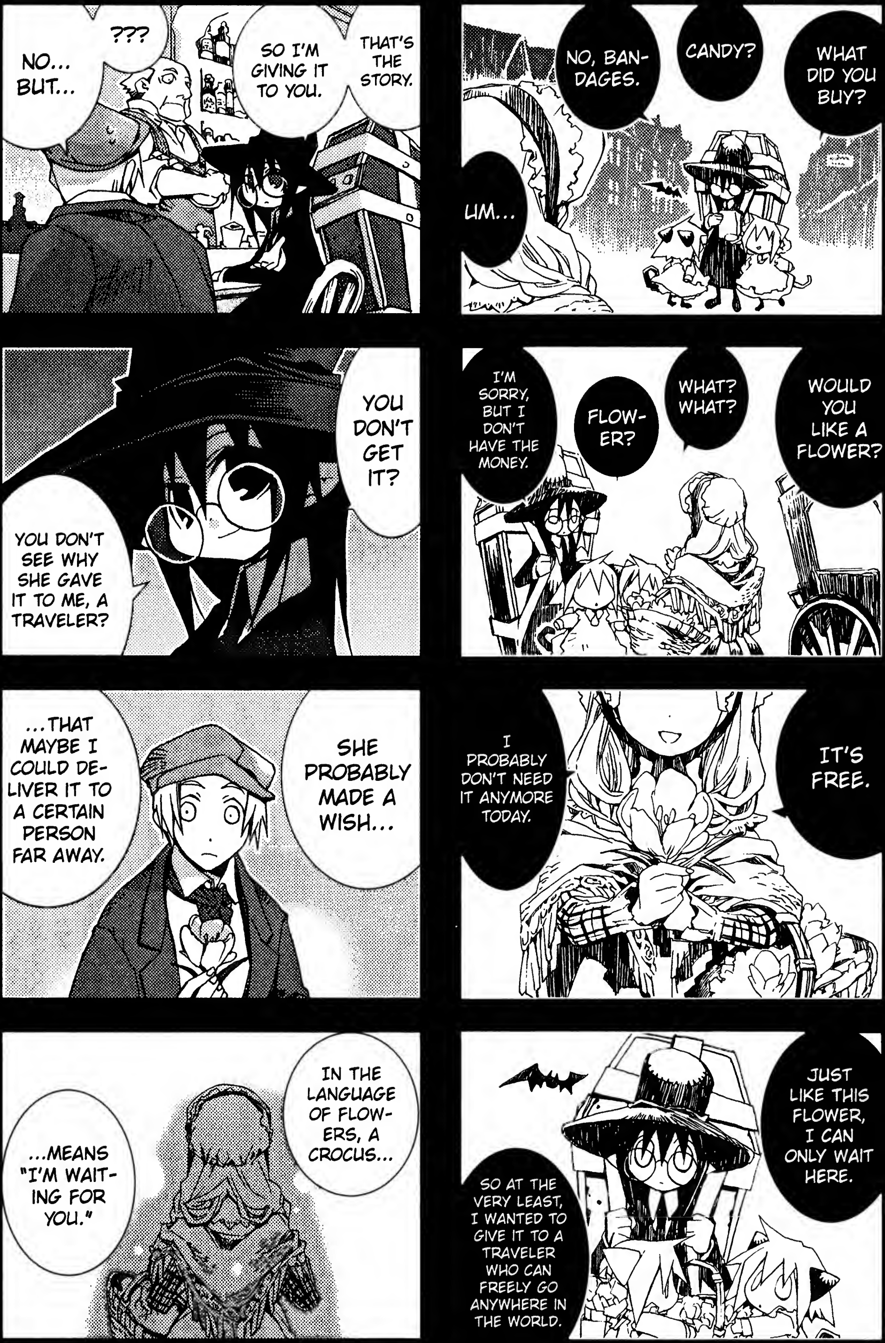

WE HAVE TO STAY HOME.
YEAH, STAY HOME.
WHAT'S THAT ON YOUR HEAD?
A FLOWER CROWN.
KURO-CHA MADE IT FOR ME.
HOW NICE. I WANT ONE TOO.
NOT THIS ONE.
I'LL MAKE ONE FOR YOU.
REALLY?
THEN, THEN...
...CAN YOU MAKE IT LIKE A PRINCESS CROWN?
NOT THIS WAY.
FACE FORWARD.
IT'S OKAY, I REMEMBERED.

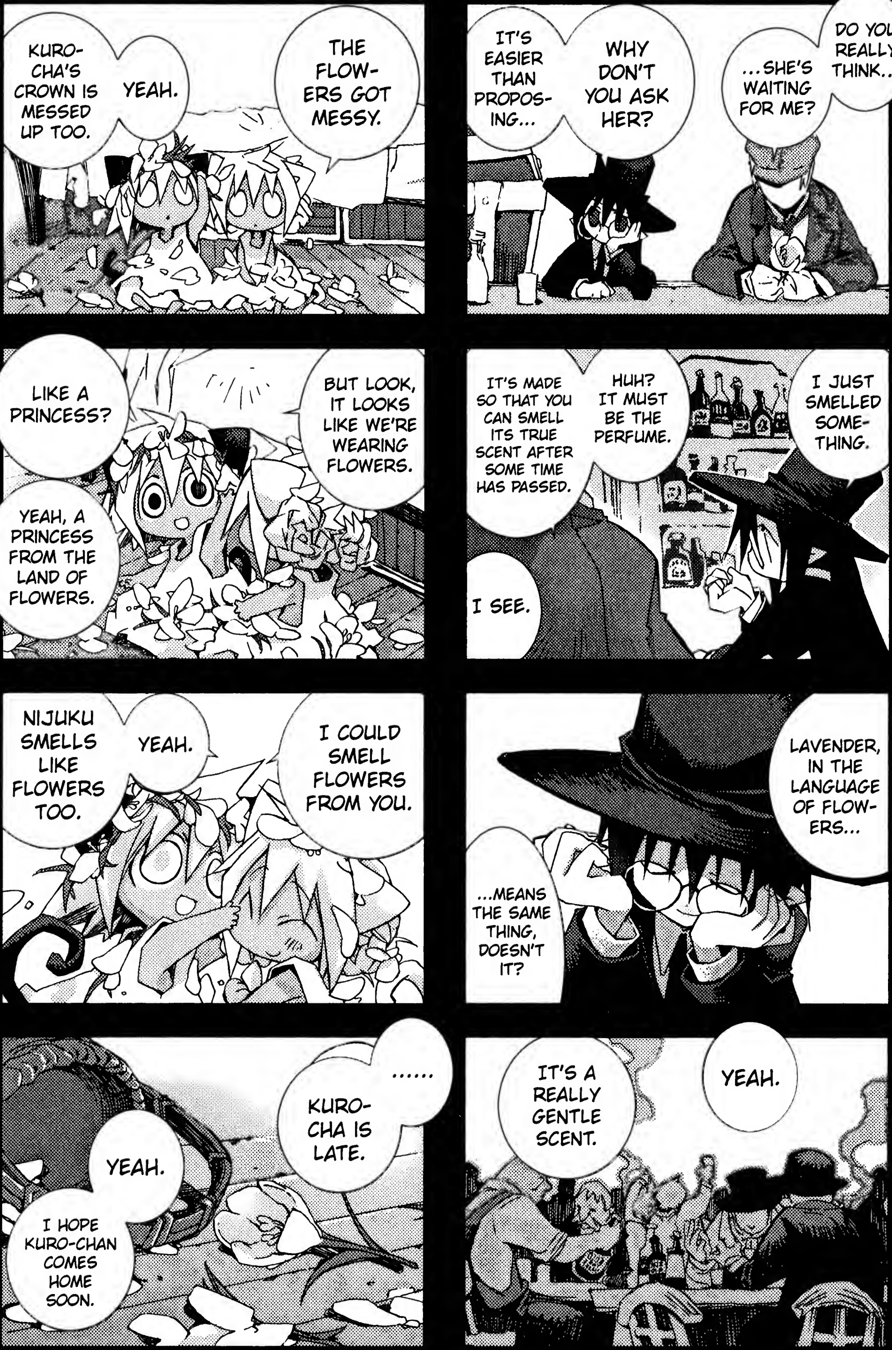

A PERFUME MAKER?
YEAH!
I WAS AN APPRENTICE AT A FOREIGN PERFUMERY AND JUST GOT BACK AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF TRAINING.
I WAS TOLD THAT EXPRESSING YOUR IMAGINATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HOW GOOD YOUR NOSE IS.
BLAB
BLAB
SO I DREW ON MY MEMORIES OF MY HOMETOWN AND MADE THIS PERFUME.
PLEASE GO AWAY.
WELL, TEST IT OUT.
THIS LAVENDER PERFUME WILL BECOME FAMOUS ONE DAY.
I CAN'T SMELL IT BECAUSE THERE'S SO MANY OTHER ODORS HERE.
......
YOU STILL HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THE SMELL OF ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO IN HERE.
POOR PERFUME.

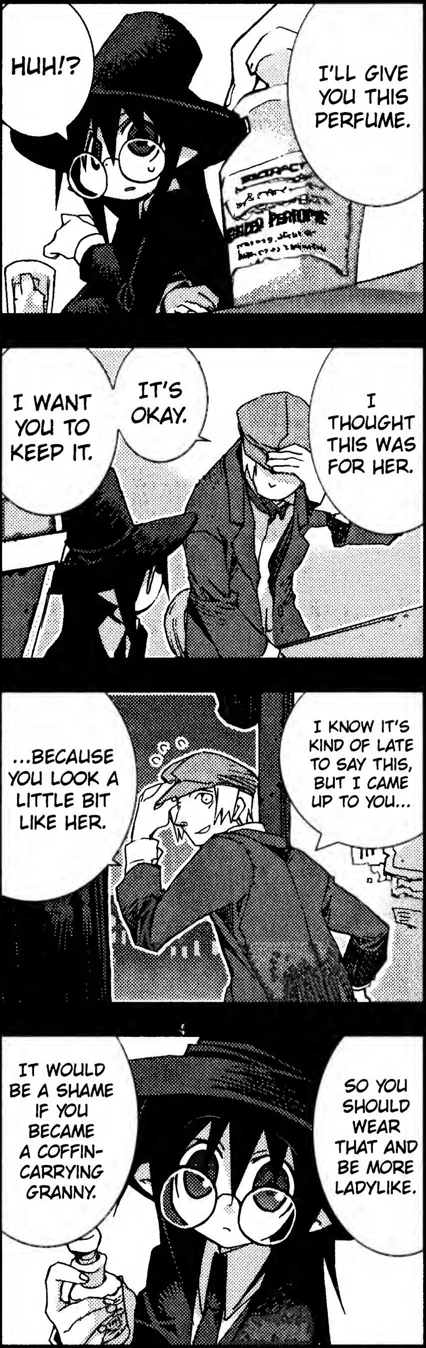

BUT I KNOW LAVENDER.
I ENCOUNTERED IT DURING MY JOURNEY.
YOU'VE BEEN EVERYWHERE, RIGHT?
WHAT'S THE BEST FLOWER YOU'VE SEEN?
THERE WERE MANY.
I SAW A SHINING FLOWER ONCE.
I SEE.
BUT, TO ME, THE FAIREST FLOWER...
...IS THE FLOWER-SELLER SMILAX.
FIRST YOUR JOB, AND NOW YOU'RE BRAGGING ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND?
I'M WASTING MY TIME.
CLATTER
OH, SORRY! I'M SORRY.
BUT PLEASE LISTEN TO MY STORY.
I'LL BUY YOU A DRINK.
WELL, ACTUALLY...
...SMILAX IS MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND AND MY FIRST LOVE.
WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER, WE WERE PLAYING TOGETHER ONE DAY AND PROMISED TO MARRY EACH OTHER.
BUT IT'S BEEN EIGHT YEARS SINCE I LEFT THIS TOWN. I HAVEN'T SEEN HER YET.
BUT I'VE DECIDED TO PROPOSE TO HER. THAT'S WHY I MADE THIS PERFUME!
THEN I THINK YOU SHOULD GO TO HER NOW...
...INSTEAD OF DRINKING HERE.
I CAN'T MUSTER THE COURAGE.
THE PAST EIGHT YEARS ARE WEIGHING ME DOWN.
YOU'RE MAKING MY DRINK TASTE BAD.
AT LEAST IT'S ONLY ORANGE JUICE.

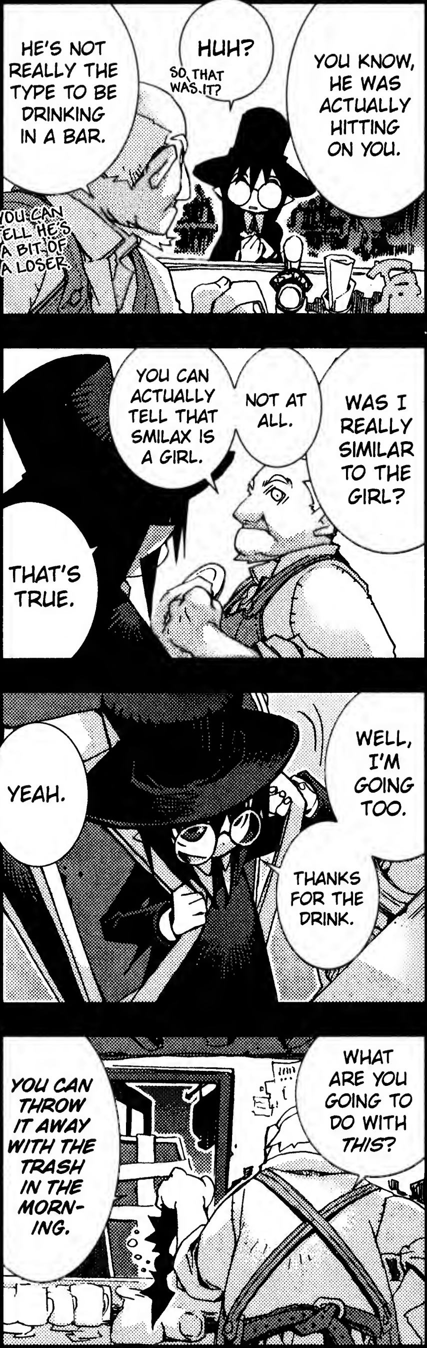

ALL DONE!
HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?
STOMP

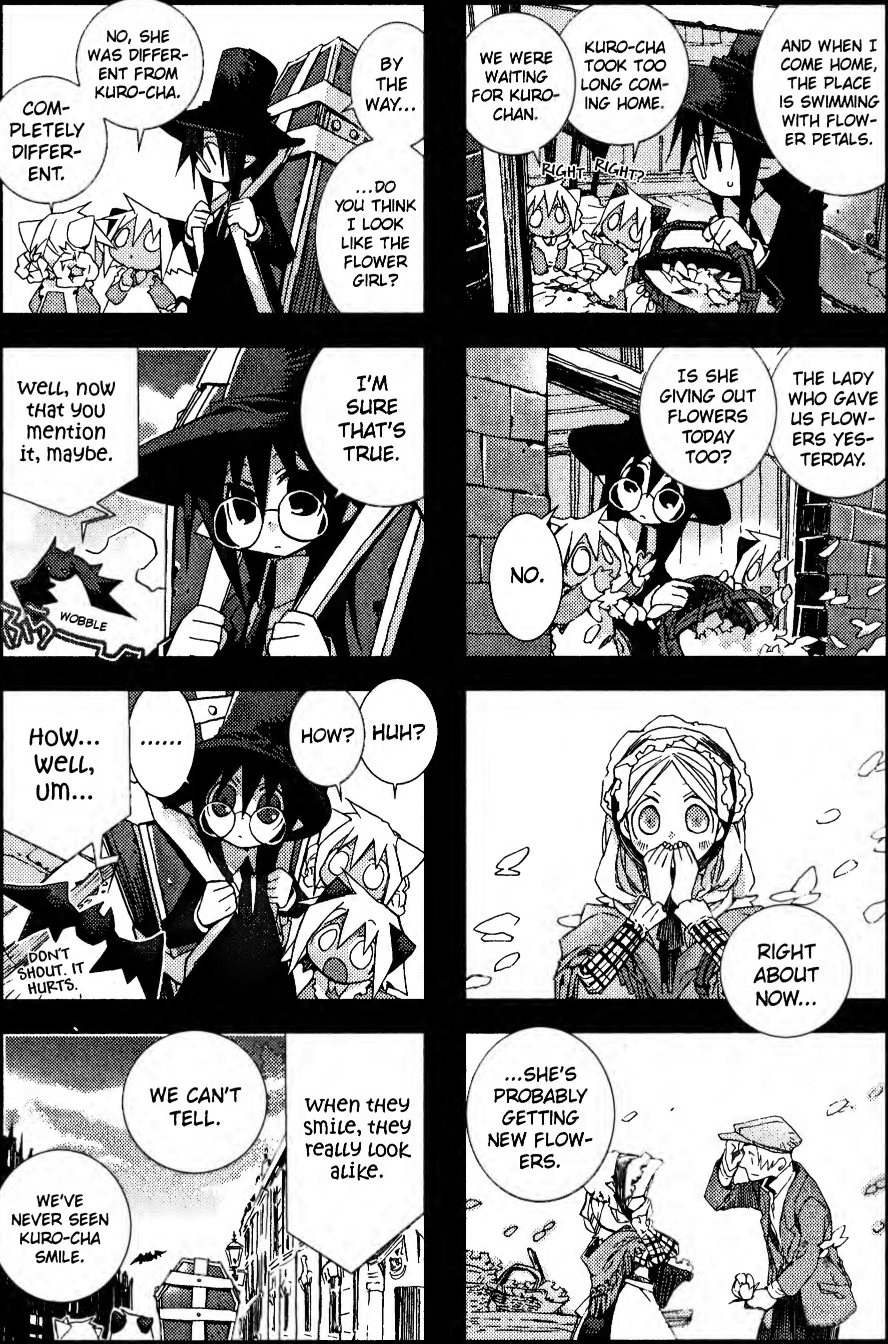

OH, I SEE.
?
NOW I GET IT.
IS THAT THE LADY SELLING FLOWERS ON THE MAIN STREET?
SMILAX IS ALWAYS SELLING THERE.
SHE WAS THE ONE WHO GAVE ME THIS FLOWER.
UH... I SEE.
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
HERE.
I DON'T NEED IT!!
ARE YOU PITYING ME!?

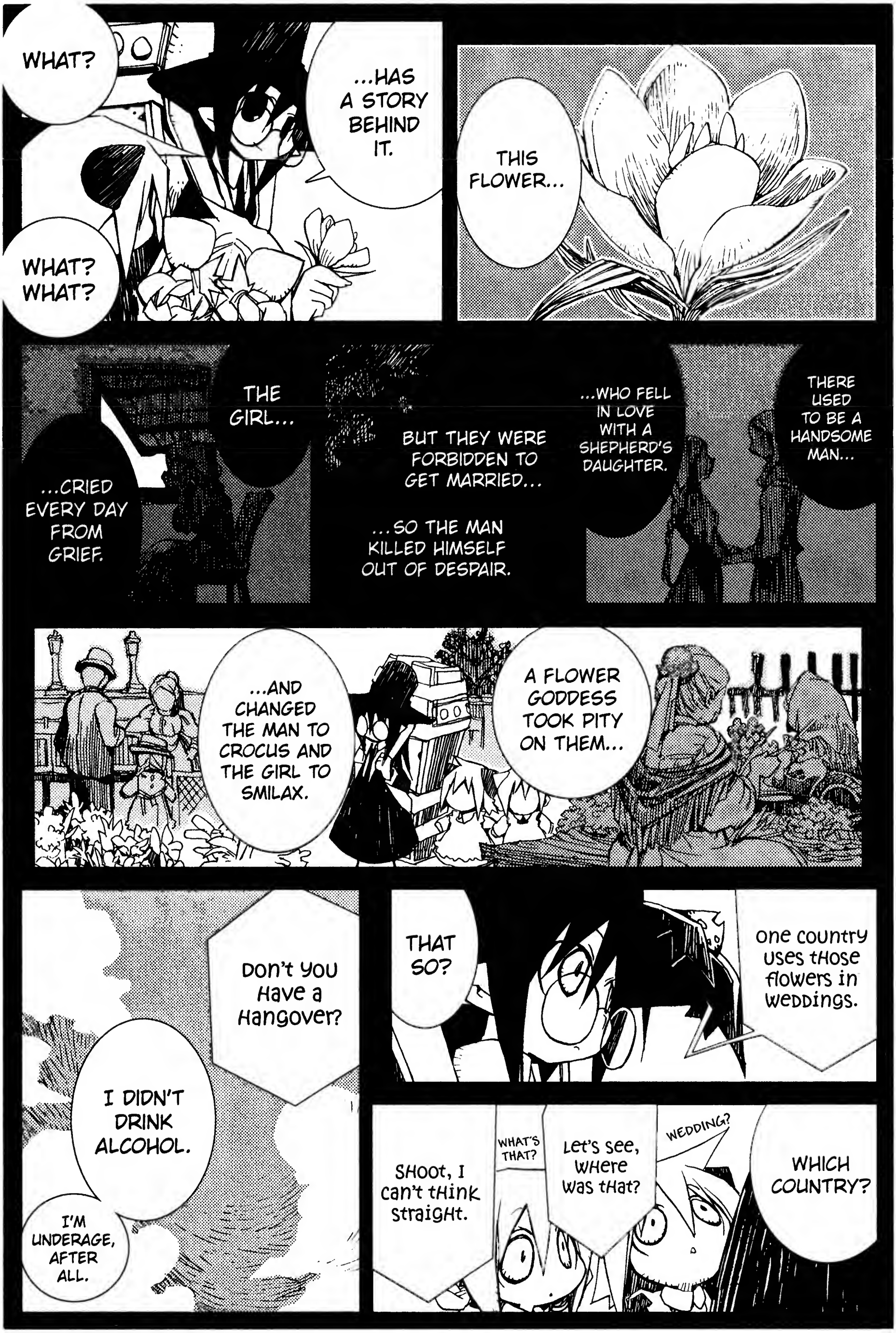

WHAT DID YOU BUY?
CANDY?
NO, BANDAGES.
UM...
WOULD YOU LIKE A FLOWER?
WHAT? WHAT?
FLOWER?
I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T HAVE THE MONEY.
IT'S FREE.
I PROBABLY DON'T NEED IT ANYMORE TODAY.
JUST LIKE THIS FLOWER, I CAN ONLY WAIT HERE.
SO AT THE VERY LEAST, I WANTED TO GIVE IT TO A TRAVELER WHO CAN FREELY GO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.
THAT'S THE STORY.
SO I'M GIVING IT TO YOU.
???
NO... BUT...
YOU DON'T GET IT?
YOU DON'T SEE WHY SHE GAVE IT TO ME, A TRAVELER?
SHE PROBABLY MADE A WISH...
...THAT MAYBE I COULD DELIVER IT TO A CERTAIN PERSON FAR AWAY.
IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, A CROCUS...
...MEANS "I'M WAITING FOR YOU."

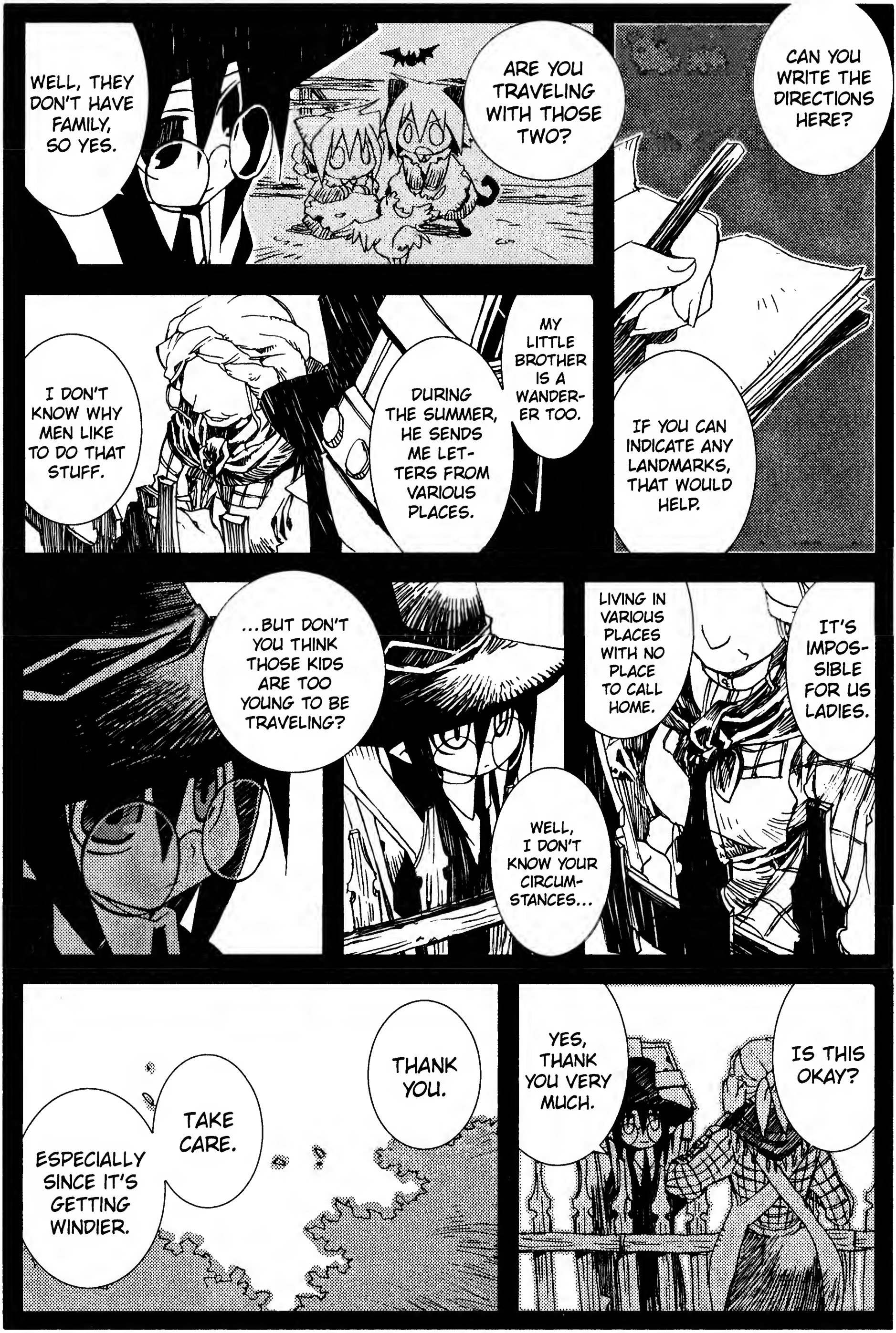

DO YOU REALLY THINK...
...SHE'S WAITING FOR ME?
WHY DON'T YOU ASK HER?
IT'S EASIER THAN PROPOSING...
I JUST SMELLED SOMETHING.
HUH? IT MUST BE THE PERFUME.
IT'S MADE SO THAT YOU CAN SMELL ITS TRUE SCENT AFTER SOME TIME HAS PASSED.
I SEE.
LAVENDER, IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS...
...MEANS THE SAME THING, DOESN'T IT?
YEAH.
IT'S A REALLY GENTLE SCENT.
THE FLOWERS GOT MESSY.
YEAH.
KURO-CHA'S CROWN IS MESSED UP TOO.
BUT LOOK, IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE WEARING FLOWERS.
LIKE A PRINCESS?
YEAH, A PRINCESS FROM THE LAND OF FLOWERS.
I COULD SMELL FLOWERS FROM YOU.
YEAH.
NIJUKU SMELLS LIKE FLOWERS TOO.
......
KURO-CHA IS LATE.
YEAH.
I HOPE KURO-CHAN COMES HOME SOON.

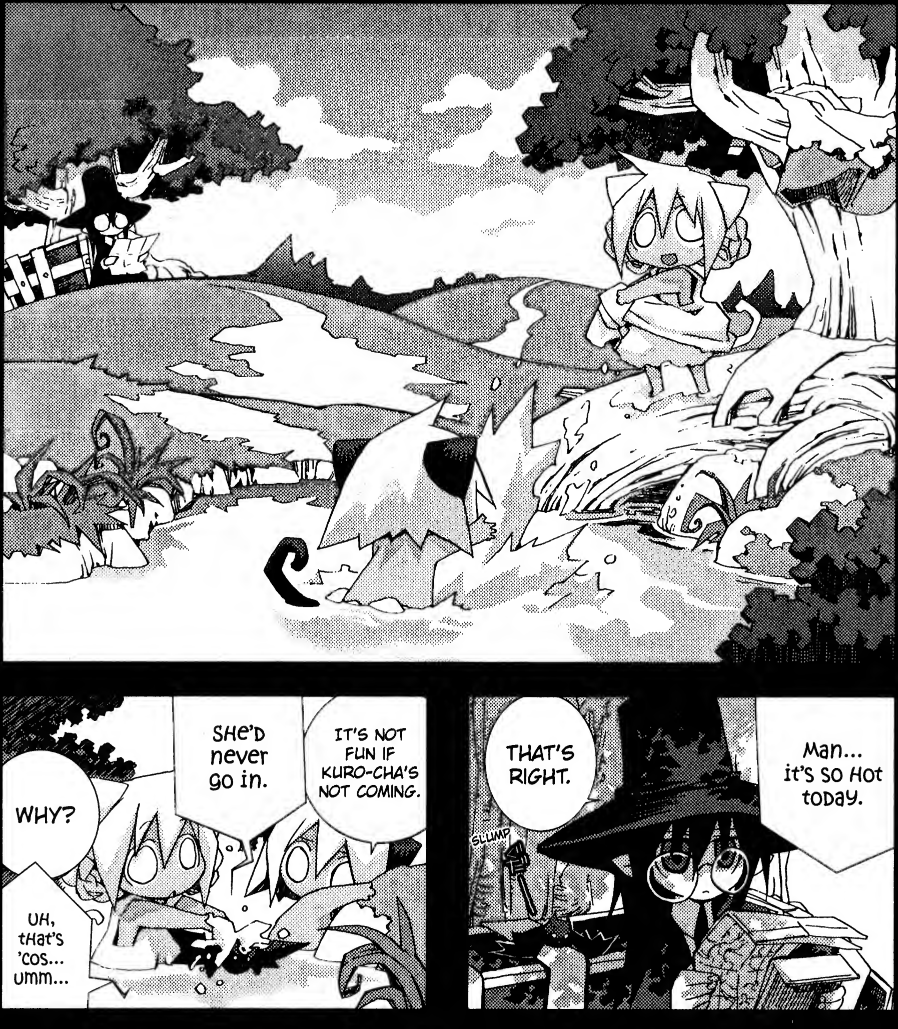

I'LL GIVE YOU THIS PERFUME.
HUH!?
EXTRACT
I THOUGHT THIS WAS FOR HER.
IT'S OKAY.
I WANT YOU TO KEEP IT.
I KNOW IT'S KIND OF LATE TO SAY THIS, BUT I CAME UP TO YOU...
...BECAUSE YOU LOOK A LITTLE BIT LIKE HER.
SO YOU SHOULD WEAR THAT AND BE MORE LADYLIKE.
IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF YOU BECAME A COFFIN-CARRYING GRANNY.

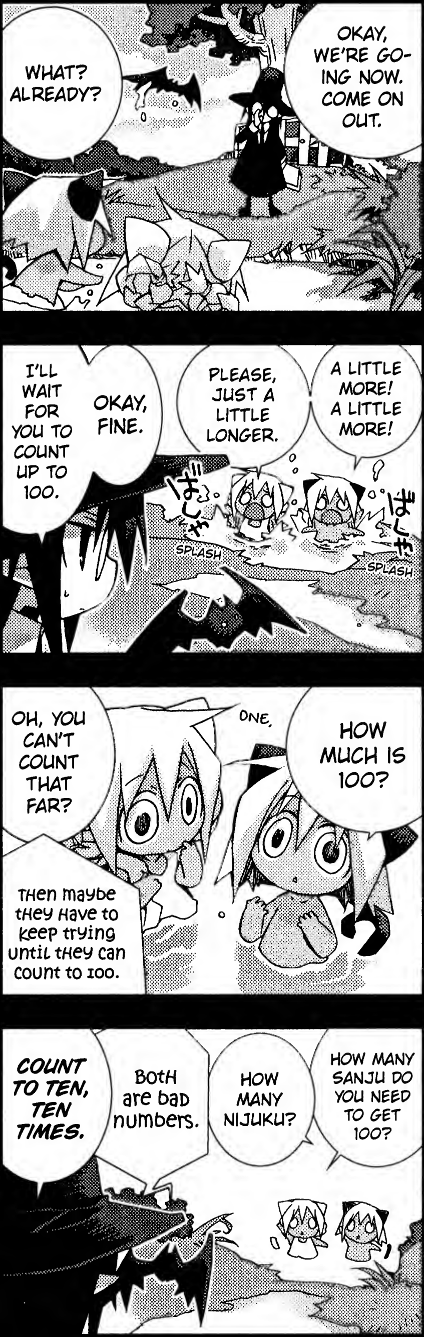

YOU KNOW, HE WAS ACTUALLY HITTING ON YOU.
HUH?
SO THAT WAS IT?
HE'S NOT REALLY THE TYPE TO BE DRINKING IN A BAR.
YOU CAN TELL HE'S A BIT OF A LOSER.
WAS I REALLY SIMILAR TO THE GIRL?
NOT AT ALL.
YOU CAN ACTUALLY TELL THAT SMILAX IS A GIRL.
THAT'S TRUE.
WELL, I'M GOING TOO.
THANKS FOR THE DRINK.
YEAH.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THIS?
YOU CAN THROW IT AWAY WITH THE TRASH IN THE MORNING.

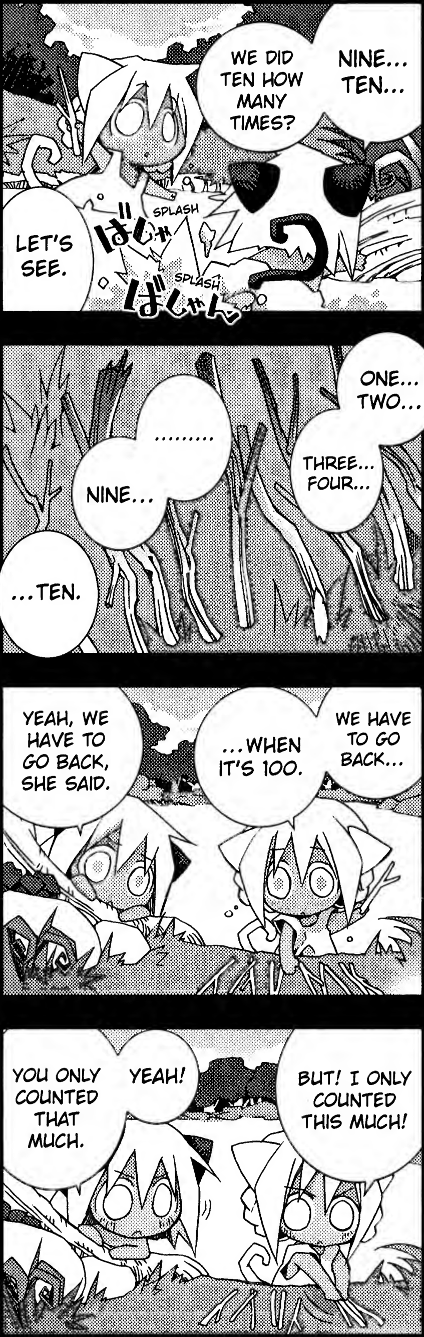

AND WHEN I COME HOME, THE PLACE IS SWIMMING WITH FLOWER PETALS.
KURO-CHA TOOK TOO LONG COMING HOME.
WE WERE WAITING FOR KURO-CHAN.
RIGHT. RIGHT?
THE LADY WHO GAVE US FLOWERS YESTERDAY.
IS SHE GIVING OUT FLOWERS TODAY TOO?
NO.
RIGHT ABOUT NOW...
...SHE'S PROBABLY GETTING NEW FLOWERS.
BY THE WAY...
...DO YOU THINK I LOOK LIKE THE FLOWER GIRL?
NO, SHE WAS DIFFERENT FROM KURO-CHA.
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
I'M SURE THAT'S TRUE.
Well, now that you mention it, maybe.
WOBBLE
HUH?
HOW?
......
How... well, um...
DON'T SHOUT. IT HURTS.
When they smile, they really look alike.
WE CAN'T TELL.
WE'VE NEVER SEEN KURO-CHA SMILE.

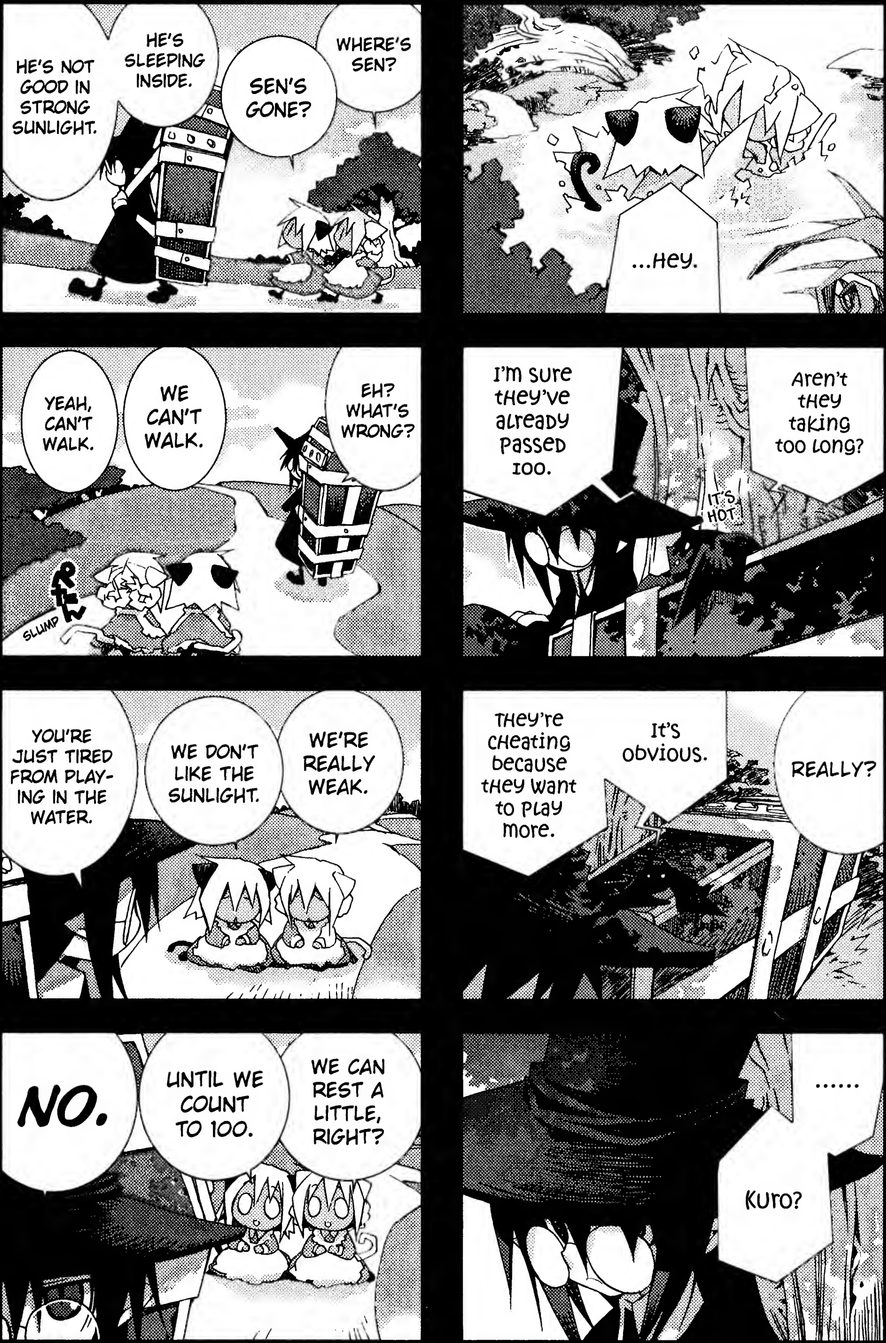

THIS FLOWER...
...HAS A STORY BEHIND IT.
WHAT?
WHAT? WHAT?
THERE USED TO BE A HANDSOME MAN...
...WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH A SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER.
BUT THEY WERE FORBIDDEN TO GET MARRIED...
...SO THE MAN KILLED HIMSELF OUT OF DESPAIR.
THE GIRL...
...CRIED EVERY DAY FROM GRIEF.
A FLOWER GODDESS TOOK PITY ON THEM...
...AND CHANGED THE MAN TO CROCUS AND THE GIRL TO SMILAX.
One country uses those flowers in weddings.
THAT SO?
WHICH COUNTRY?
WEDDING?
Let's see, where was that?
WHAT'S THAT?
Shoot, I can't think straight.
Don't you have a hangover?
I DIDN'T DRINK ALCOHOL.
I'M UNDERAGE, AFTER ALL.

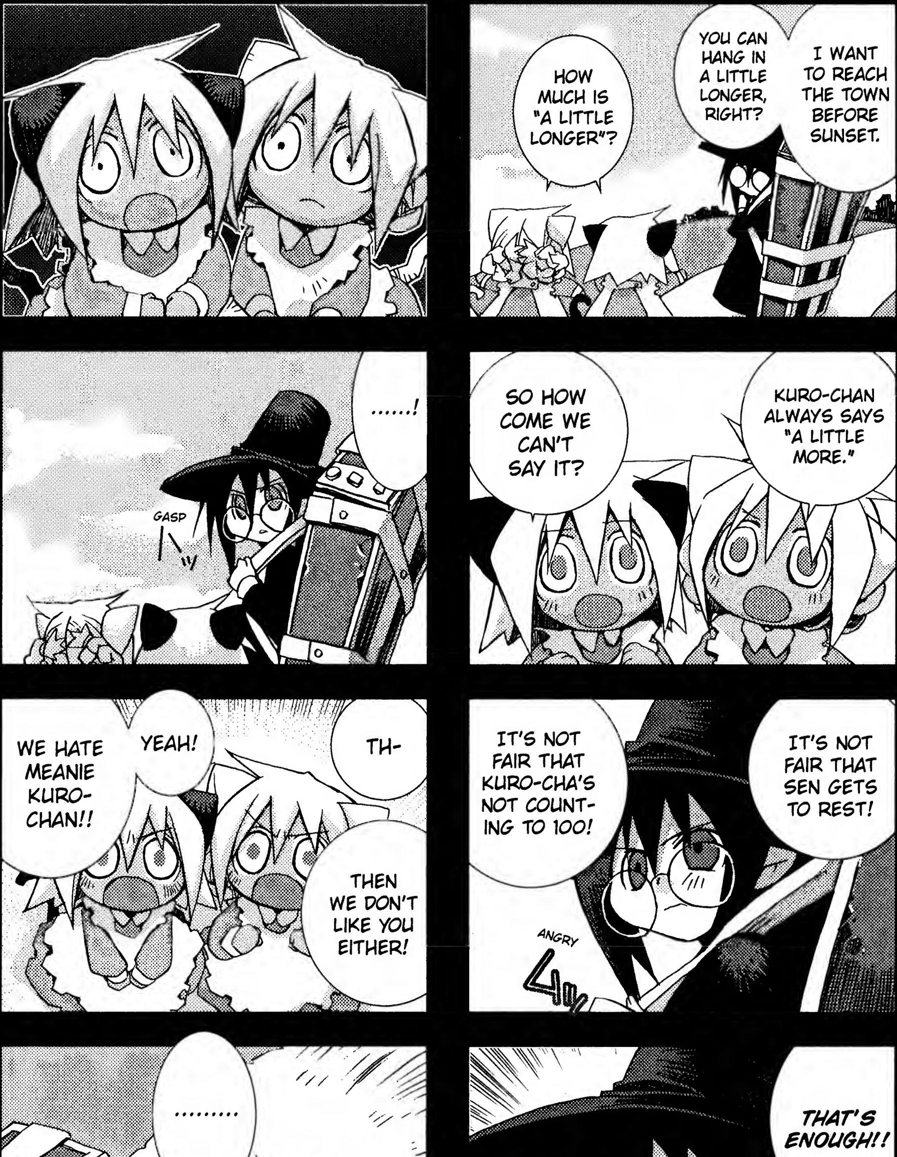

CAN YOU WRITE THE DIRECTIONS HERE?
IF YOU CAN INDICATE ANY LANDMARKS, THAT WOULD HELP.
ARE YOU TRAVELING WITH THOSE TWO?
WELL, THEY DON'T HAVE FAMILY, SO YES.
MY LITTLE BROTHER IS A WANDERER TOO.
DURING THE SUMMER, HE SENDS ME LETTERS FROM VARIOUS PLACES.
I DON'T KNOW WHY MEN LIKE TO DO THAT STUFF.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR US LADIES.
LIVING IN VARIOUS PLACES WITH NO PLACE TO CALL HOME.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES...
...BUT DON'T YOU THINK THOSE KIDS ARE TOO YOUNG TO BE TRAVELING?
IS THIS OKAY?
YES, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THANK YOU.
TAKE CARE.
ESPECIALLY SINCE IT'S GETTING WINDIER.

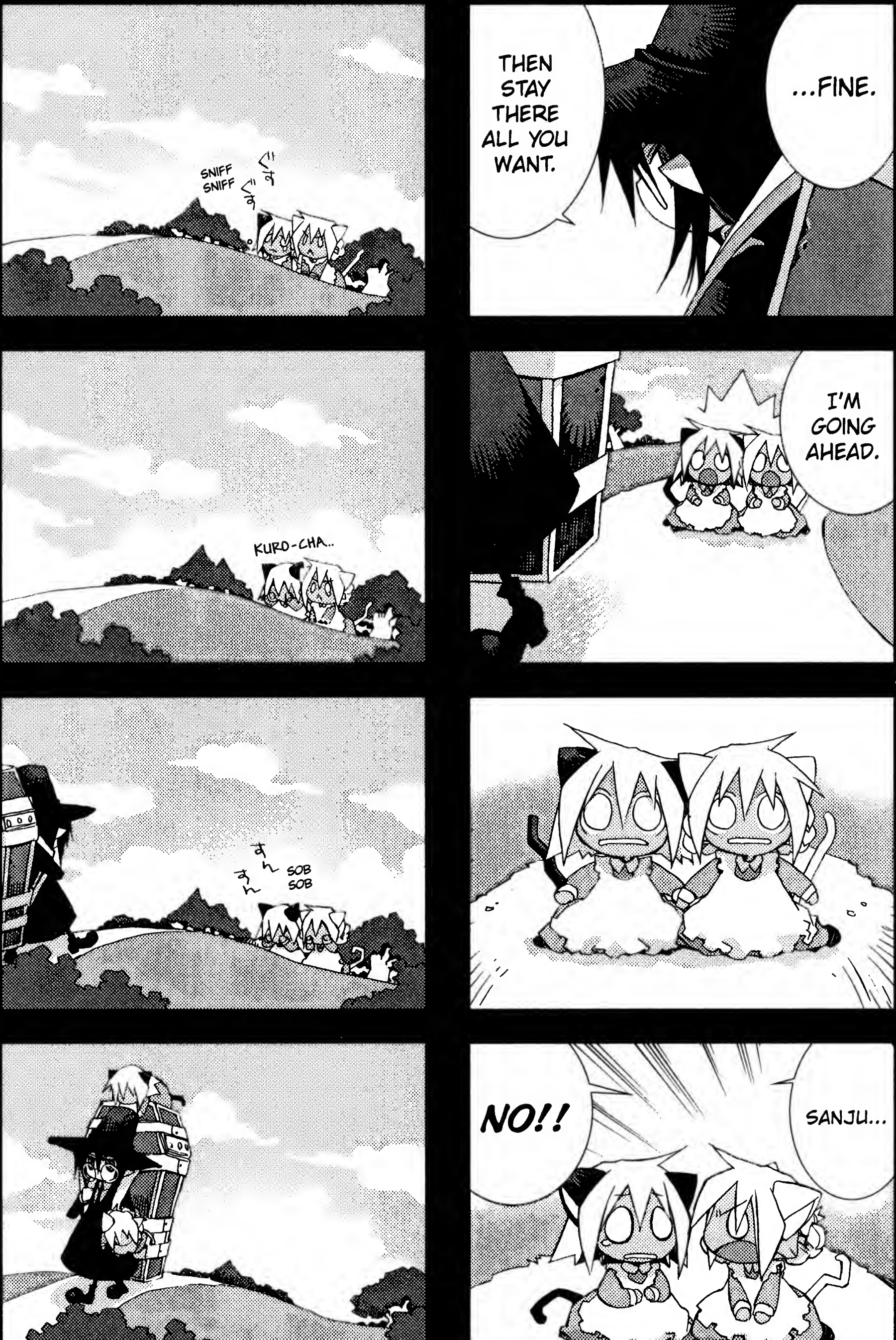

Man... it's so Hot today.
THAT'S RIGHT.
SLUMP
IT'S NOT FUN IF KURO-CHA'S NOT COMING.
SHE'D never go in.
WHY?
UH, that's 'cos... umm...
THE WATER FEELS GOOD.
KURO-CHA, YOU SHOULD COME IN TOO.
NO THANKS.
SHE CAN'T SWIM?
SHE HATES WATER?
RIGHT.
PLUS, SHE melts when she gets in the water.
REALLY...? EVEN I DIDN'T KNOW THAT ONE.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

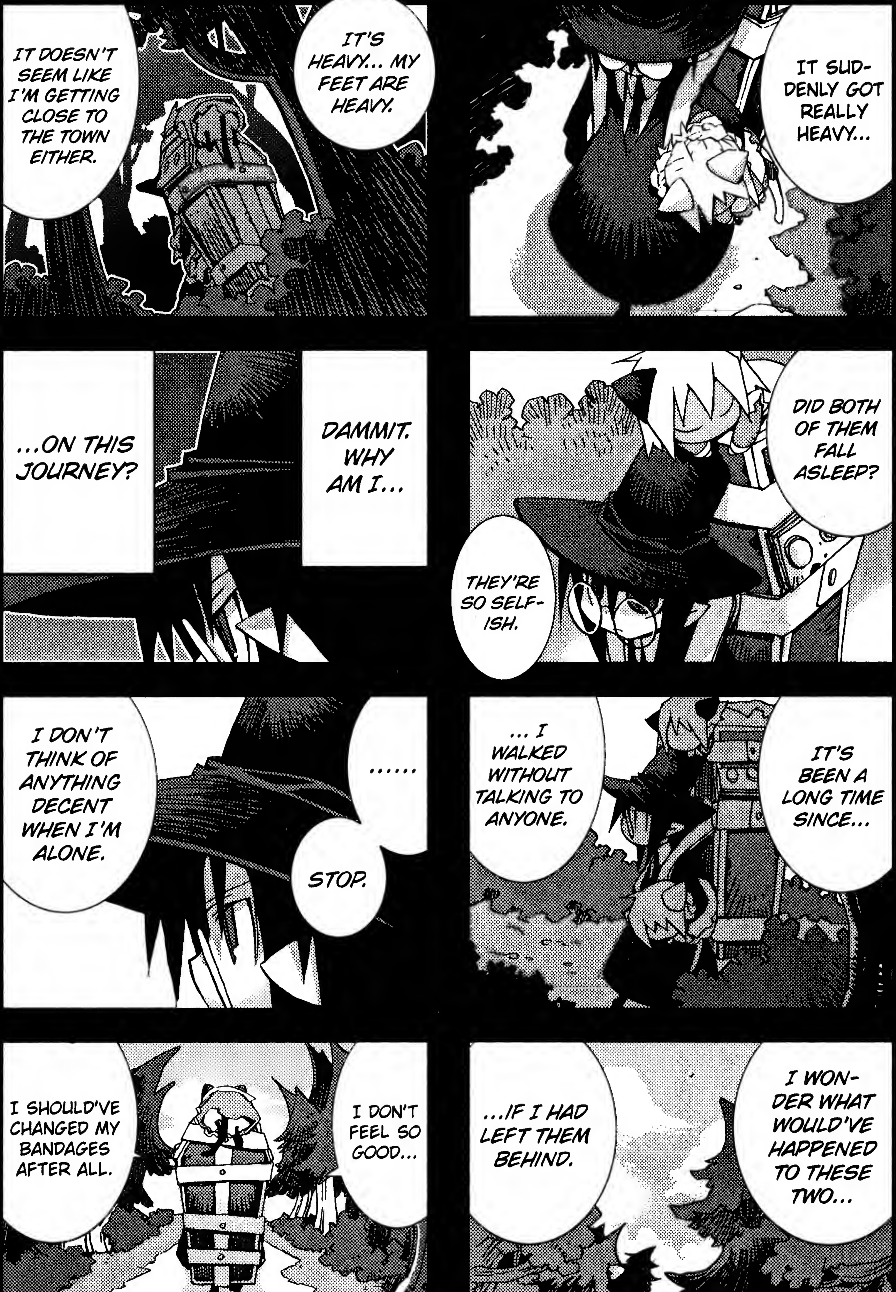

OKAY, WE'RE GOING NOW. COME ON OUT.
WHAT? ALREADY?
A LITTLE MORE! A LITTLE MORE!
PLEASE, JUST A LITTLE LONGER.
ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SPLASH
OKAY, FINE.
I'LL WAIT FOR YOU TO COUNT UP TO 100.
HOW MUCH IS 100?
ONE,
OH, YOU CAN'T COUNT THAT FAR?
Then maybe they have to keep trying until they can count to 100.
HOW MANY SANJU DO YOU NEED TO GET 100?
HOW MANY NIJUKU?
Both are bad numbers.
COUNT TO TEN, TEN TIMES.

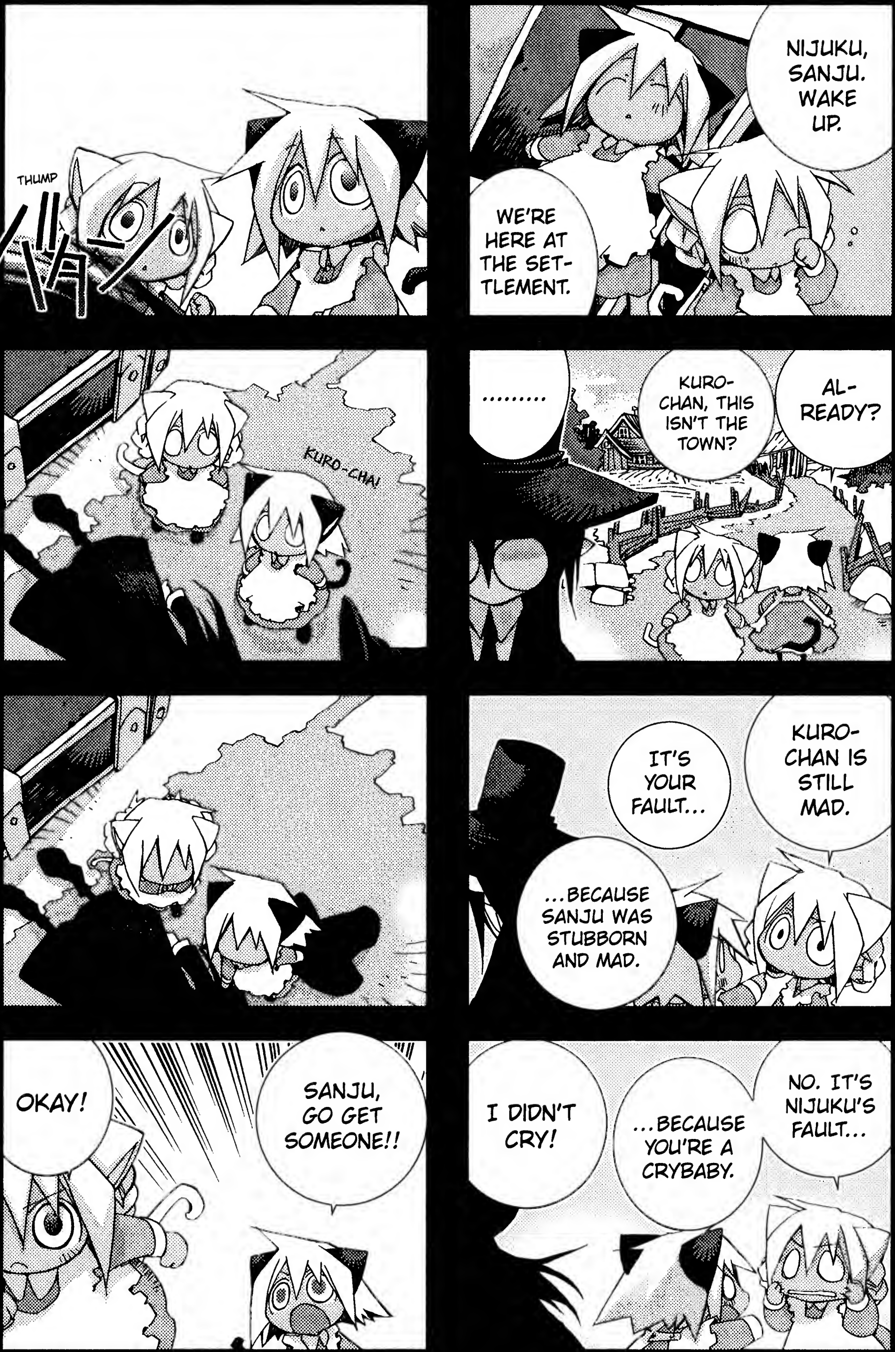

NINE... TEN...
WE DID TEN HOW MANY TIMES?
LET'S SEE.
ばしゃ
SPLASH
ばしゃん
SPLASH
ONE... TWO...
THREE... FOUR...
.........
NINE...
...TEN.
WE HAVE TO GO BACK...
...WHEN IT'S 100.
YEAH, WE HAVE TO GO BACK, SHE SAID.
BUT! I ONLY COUNTED THIS MUCH!
YEAH!
YOU ONLY COUNTED THAT MUCH.

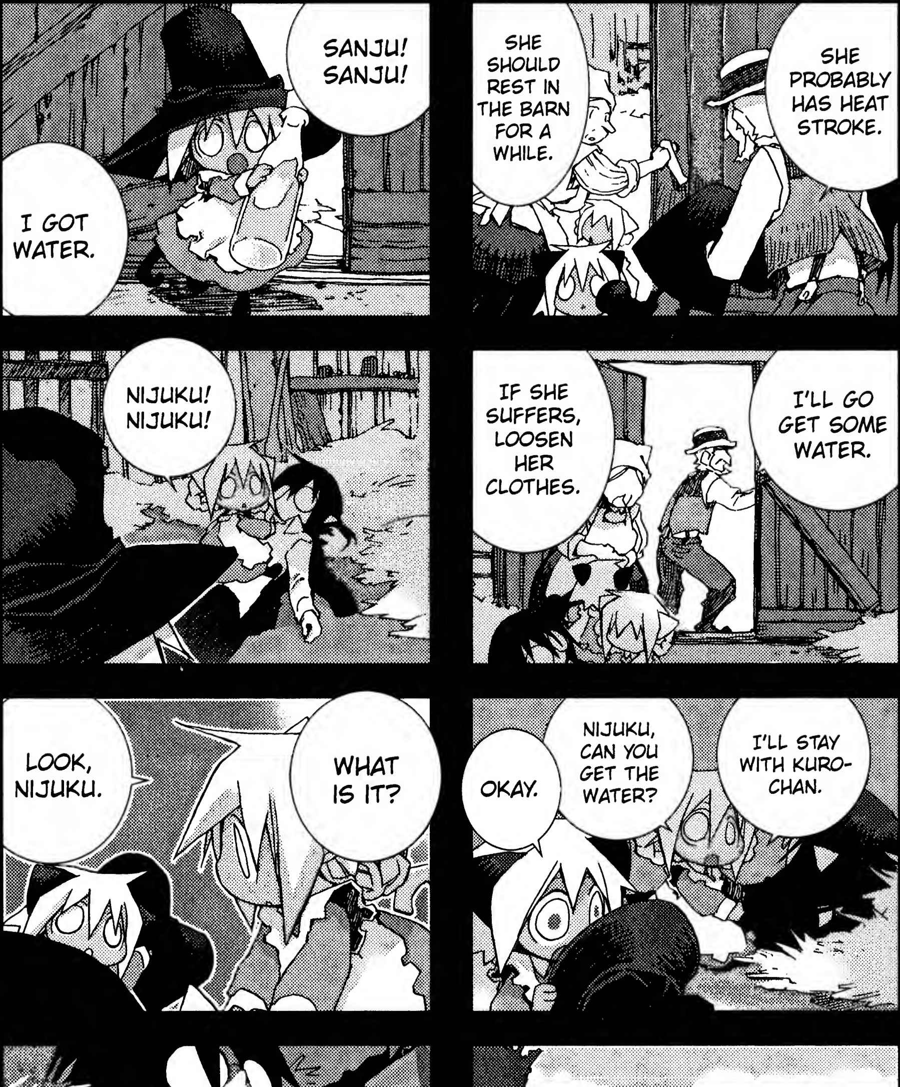

WHERE'S SEN?
SEN'S GONE?
HE'S SLEEPING INSIDE.
HE'S NOT GOOD IN STRONG SUNLIGHT.
EH? WHAT'S WRONG?
WE CAN'T WALK.
YEAH, CAN'T WALK.
ぺたん
SLUMP
WE'RE REALLY WEAK.
WE DON'T LIKE THE SUNLIGHT.
YOU'RE JUST TIRED FROM PLAYING IN THE WATER.
WE CAN REST A LITTLE, RIGHT?
UNTIL WE COUNT TO 100.
NO.
...Hey.
Aren't they taking too long?
I'm sure they've already passed 100.
IT'S HOT.
REALLY?
It's obvious.
They're cheating because they want to play more.
......
Kuro?

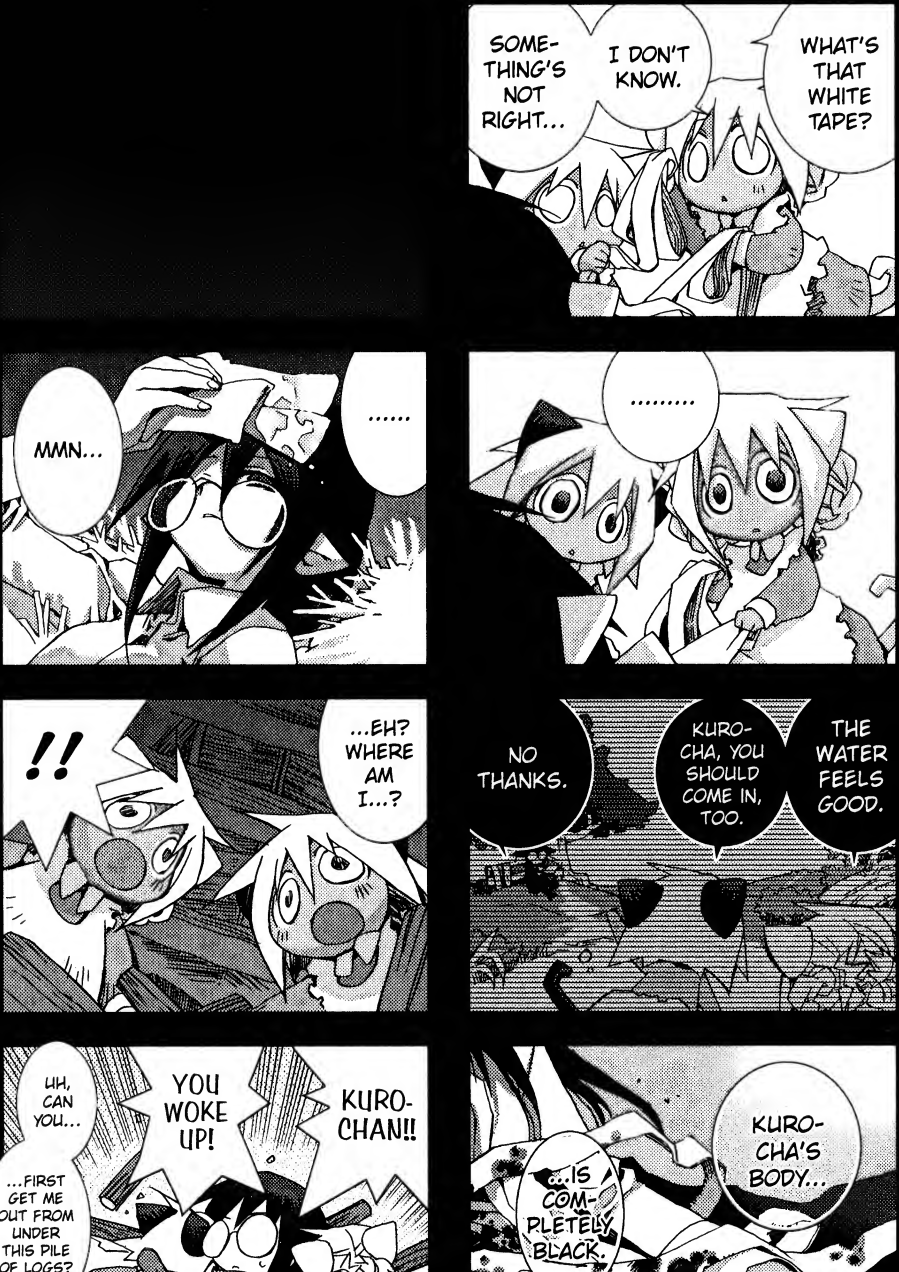

I WANT TO REACH THE TOWN BEFORE SUNSET.
YOU CAN HANG IN A LITTLE LONGER, RIGHT?
HOW MUCH IS "A LITTLE LONGER"?
KURO-CHAN ALWAYS SAYS "A LITTLE MORE."
SO HOW COME WE CAN'T SAY IT?
......!
GASP
IT'S NOT FAIR THAT SEN GETS TO REST!
IT'S NOT FAIR THAT KURO-CHA'S NOT COUNTING TO 100!
ANGRY
TH-
THEN WE DON'T LIKE YOU EITHER!
YEAH!
WE HATE MEANIE KURO-CHAN!!
THAT'S ENOUGH!!
I HATE SELFISH KIDS!!
.........

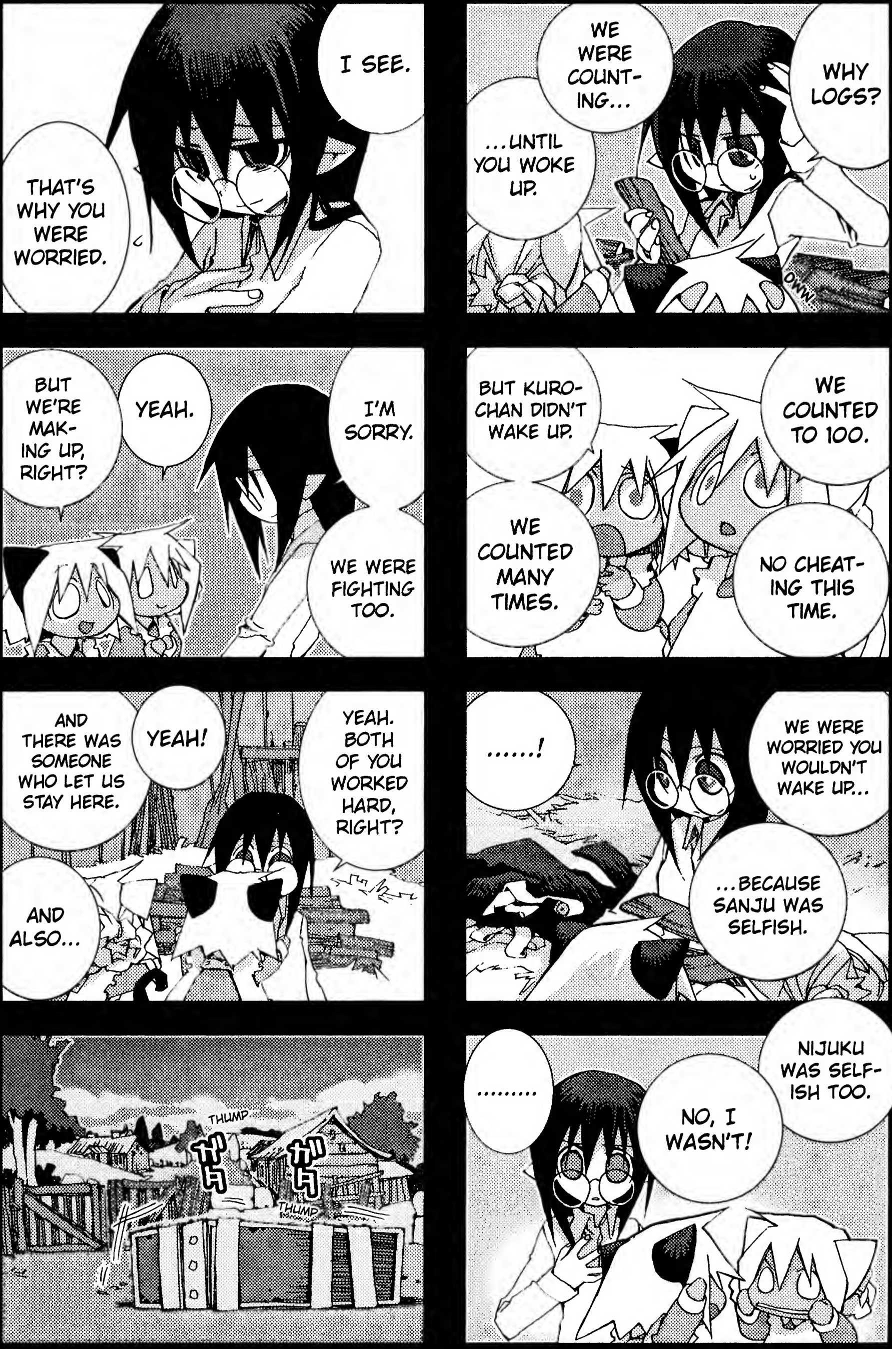

...FINE.
THEN STAY THERE ALL YOU WANT.
I'M GOING AHEAD.
SANJU...
NO!!
ぐすぐす
SNIFF SNIFF
KURO-CHA..
すんすん
SOB SOB

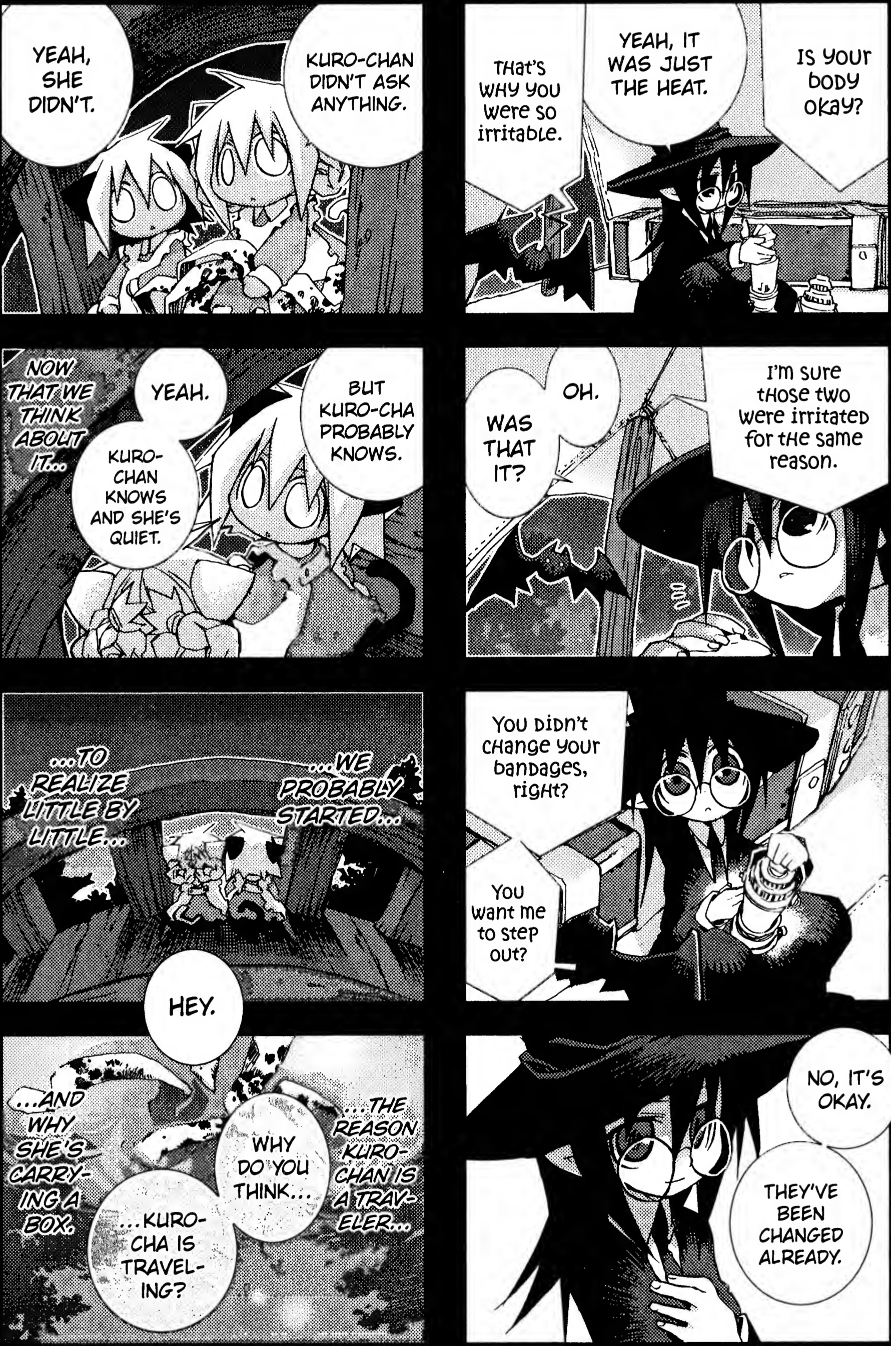

IT SUDDENLY GOT REALLY HEAVY...
IT'S HEAVY... MY FEET ARE HEAVY.
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE I'M GETTING CLOSE TO THE TOWN EITHER.
DID BOTH OF THEM FALL ASLEEP?
THEY'RE SO SELFISH.
DAMMIT. WHY AM I...
...ON THIS JOURNEY?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE...
... I WALKED WITHOUT TALKING TO ANYONE.
......
STOP.
I DON'T THINK OF ANYTHING DECENT WHEN I'M ALONE.
I WONDER WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED TO THESE TWO...
...IF I HAD LEFT THEM BEHIND.
I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...
I SHOULD'VE CHANGED MY BANDAGES AFTER ALL.


NIJUKU, SANJU. WAKE UP.
WE'RE HERE AT THE SETTLEMENT.
THUMP
AL-READY?
KURO-CHAN, THIS ISN'T THE TOWN?
.........
KURO-CHA!
KURO-CHAN IS STILL MAD.
IT'S YOUR FAULT...
...BECAUSE SANJU WAS STUBBORN AND MAD.
NO. IT'S NIJUKU'S FAULT...
...BECAUSE YOU'RE A CRYBABY.
I DIDN'T CRY!
SANJU, GO GET SOMEONE!!
OKAY!


SHE PROBABLY HAS HEAT STROKE.
SHE SHOULD REST IN THE BARN FOR A WHILE.
SANJU! SANJU!
I GOT WATER.
I'LL GO GET SOME WATER.
IF SHE SUFFERS, LOOSEN HER CLOTHES.
NIJUKU! NIJUKU!
I'LL STAY WITH KURO-CHAN.
NIJUKU, CAN YOU GET THE WATER?
OKAY.
LOOK, NIJUKU.
WHAT IS IT?
WHUMP
WHUMP
KURO-CHAN'S INSIDE...
...IS A LITTLE WEIRD.


WHAT'S THAT WHITE TAPE?
I DON'T KNOW.
SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT...
.........
......
MMN...
THE WATER FEELS GOOD.
KURO-CHA, YOU SHOULD COME IN, TOO.
NO THANKS.
...EH? WHERE AM I...?
!!
KURO-CHA'S BODY...
...IS COMPLETELY BLACK.
KURO-CHAN!!
YOU WOKE UP!
UH, CAN YOU...
...FIRST GET ME OUT FROM UNDER THIS PILE OF LOGS?


WHY LOGS?
WE WERE COUNTING…
…UNTIL YOU WOKE UP.
OWW…
WE COUNTED TO 100.
BUT KURO-CHAN DIDN'T WAKE UP.
NO CHEATING THIS TIME.
WE COUNTED MANY TIMES.
WE WERE WORRIED YOU WOULDN'T WAKE UP…
…BECAUSE SANJU WAS SELFISH.
……!
NIJUKU WAS SELFISH TOO.
NO, I WASN'T!
………
I SEE.
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE WORRIED.
I'M SORRY.
WE WERE FIGHTING TOO.
YEAH.
BUT WE'RE MAKING UP, RIGHT?
YEAH. BOTH OF YOU WORKED HARD, RIGHT?
YEAH!
AND THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO LET US STAY HERE.
AND ALSO…
THUMP…
ガタ
ガタ
THUMP


Is your body okay?
Yeah, it was just the heat.
That's why you were so irritable.
I'm sure those two were irritated for the same reason.
Oh.
Was that it?
You didn't change your bandages, right?
You want me to step out?
No, it's okay.
They've been changed already.
Kuro-chan didn't ask anything.
Yeah, she didn't.
But Kuro-cha probably knows.
Yeah.
Kuro-chan knows and she's quiet.
Now that we think about it...
...we probably started...
...to realize little by little...
Hey.
...the reason Kuro-chan is a traveler...
...and why she's carrying a box.
Why do you think...
...Kuro-cha is traveling?

THANK YOU FOR READING *SHOULDER-A-COFFIN KURO*. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY EDITOR AND EVERYONE INVOLVED IN MAKING THIS BOOK. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THOSE WHO PICKED UP THIS BOOK.

I WOULD BE HAPPY IF I COULD SEE YOU AGAIN IN THE NEXT VOLUME!

SATOKO KIYUDUKI

# TRANSLATION NOTES

Page 9
*Janken* is the Japanese equivalent of rock-paper-scissors. Instead of saying "one, two, three," the Japanese say, "*Jan-ken-pon!*"

Page 12
*Onii-san* can be used as a polite term for an unrelated younger man who is or appears older than the speaker.

Page 34
*Nijuku* and *Sanju* are shortened terms for the numbers "twenty-nine" (*nijuuku*) and "thirty" (*sanjuu*) in Japanese.

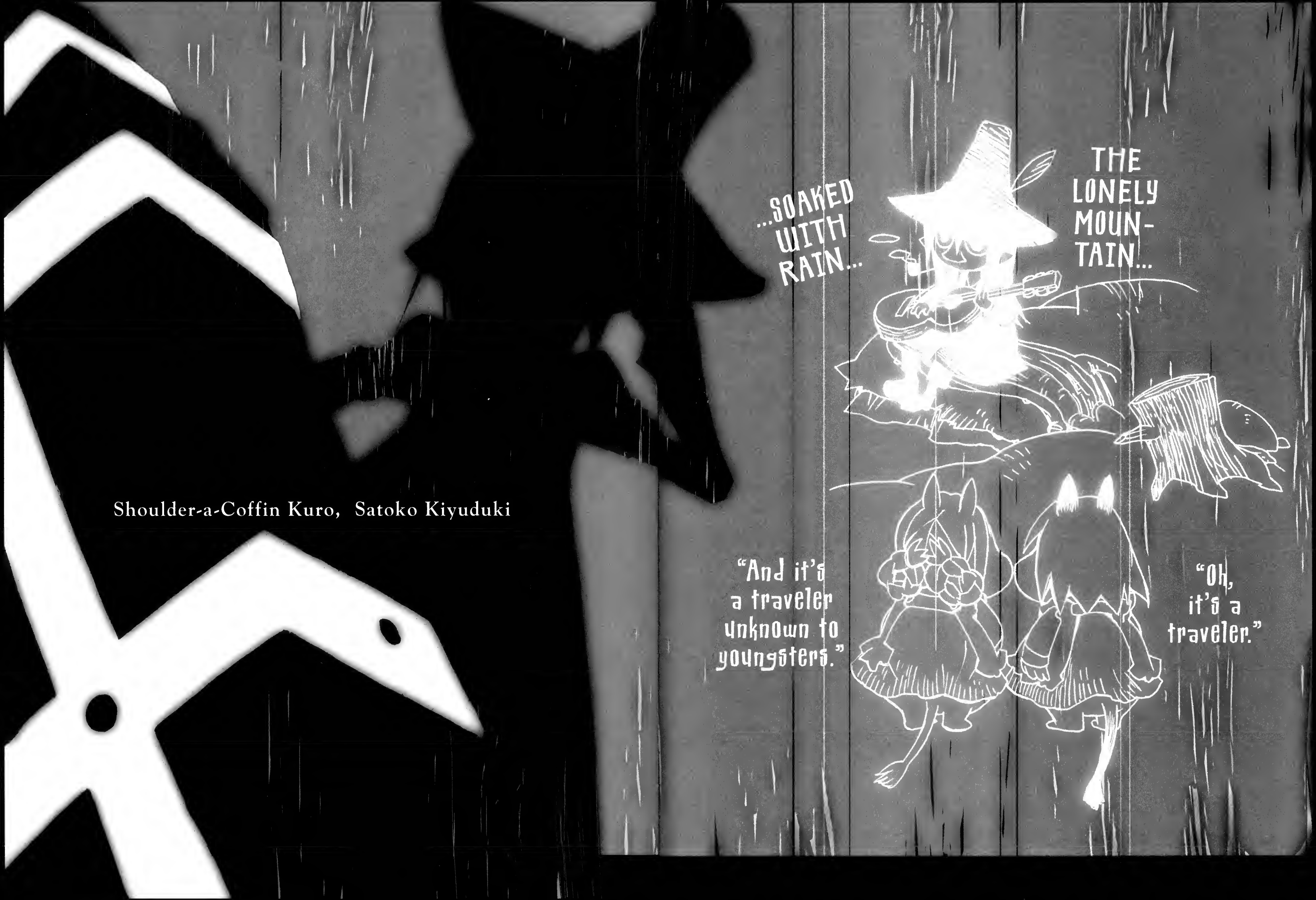
Page 35
*Kuro* means "black" in Japanese.

Page 75
*Sir Munchausen* refers to Baron Munchausen (1720-1797), a German baron who was infamous for his tall tales.

Page 77
*Tadaima* is short for *tadaima modorimashita,* which translates as "I'm home." *Okaeri* is short for *okaerinasai* which translates as "Welcome back."

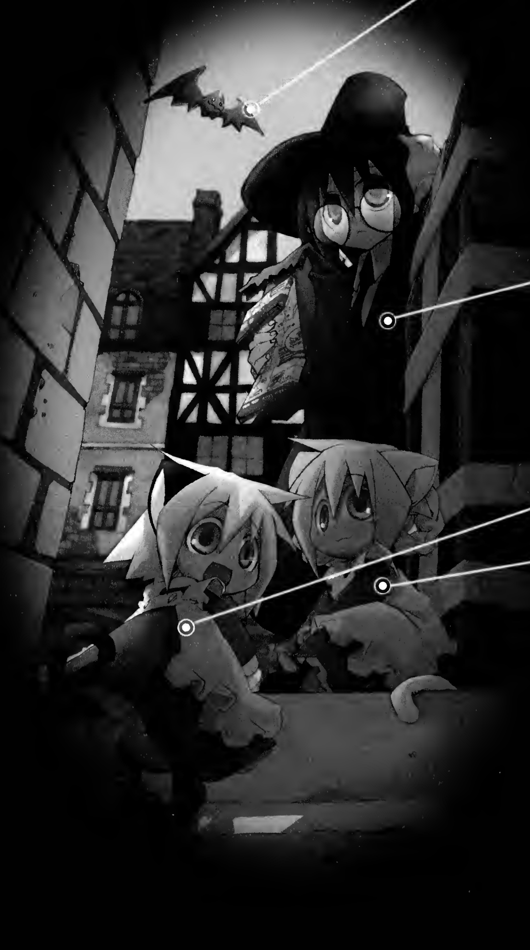
Page 77
*Ojii-chan* is an affectionate term for an elderly gentleman.

Page 93
The Japanese have a superstition that when you sneeze, it means that someone is saying something about you. If you sneeze once, someone is saying something good; if you sneeze twice, someone is saying something bad. If you sneeze three times or more, it's just a cold.


THE LONELY MOUNTAIN...
...SOAKED WITH RAIN...
"Oh, it's a traveler."
"And it's a traveler unknown to youngsters."

Shoulder-a-Coffin Kuro, Satoko Kiyuduki

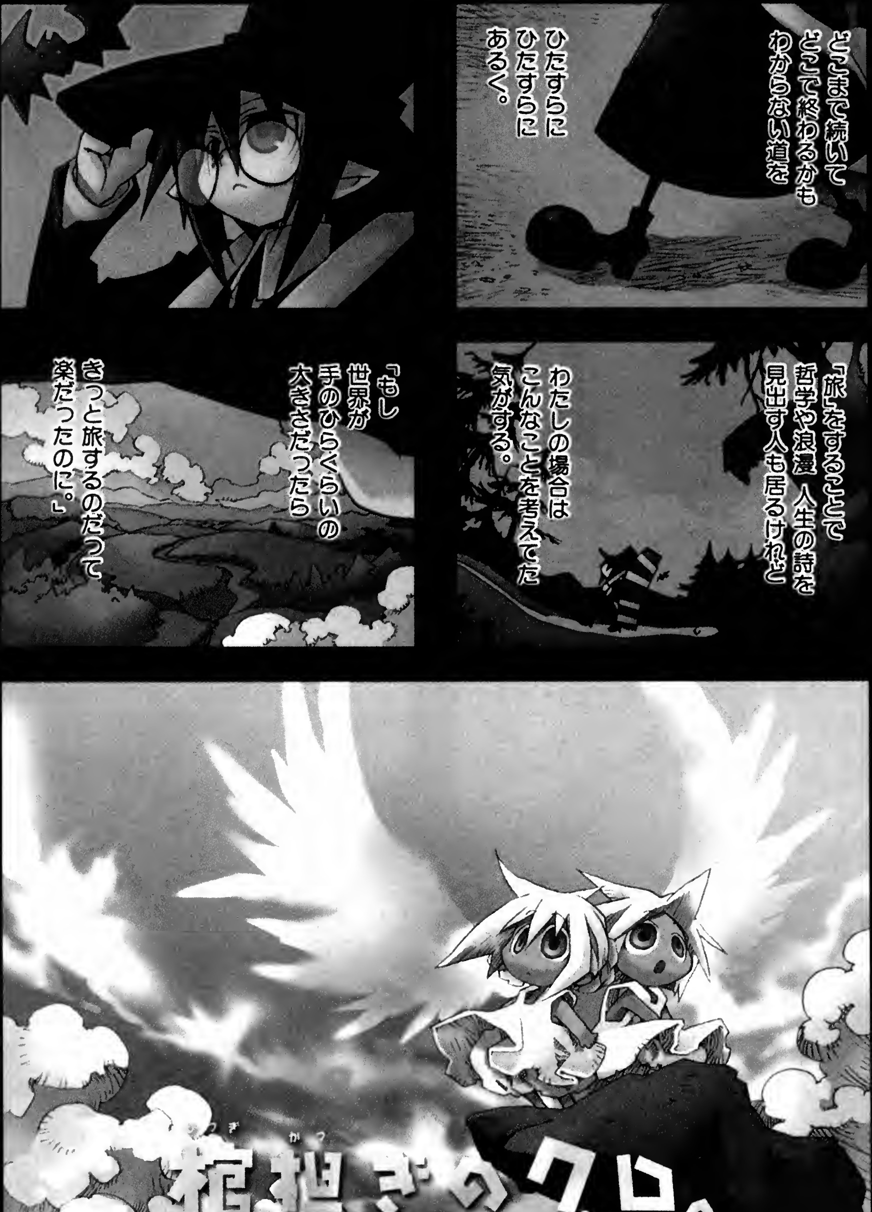
# Shoulder-a-Coffin KURO ...SPEAK!



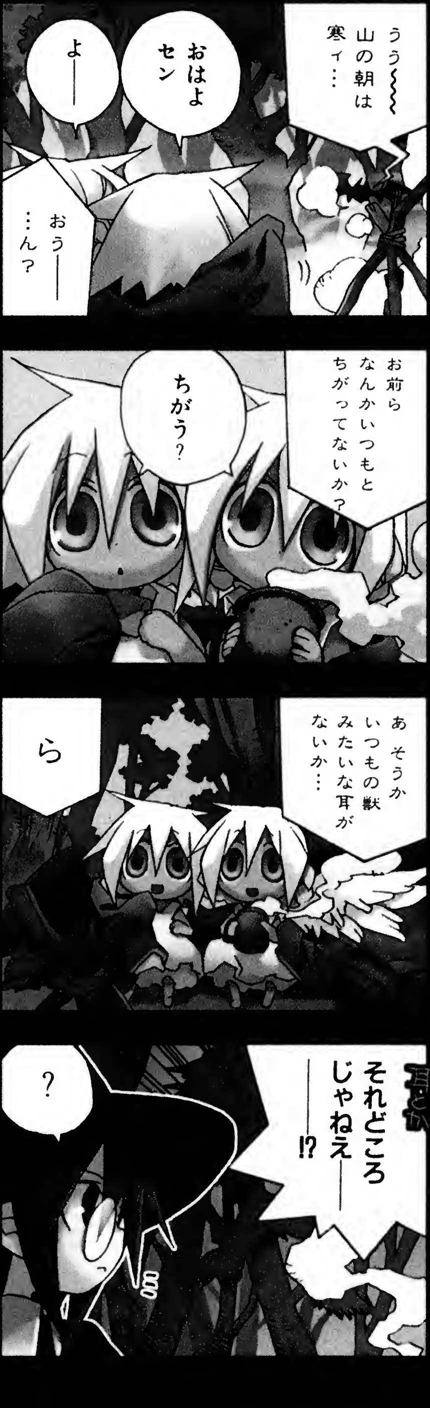
SEN is... well, Sen. Snarky to a fault, but often the voice of reason.

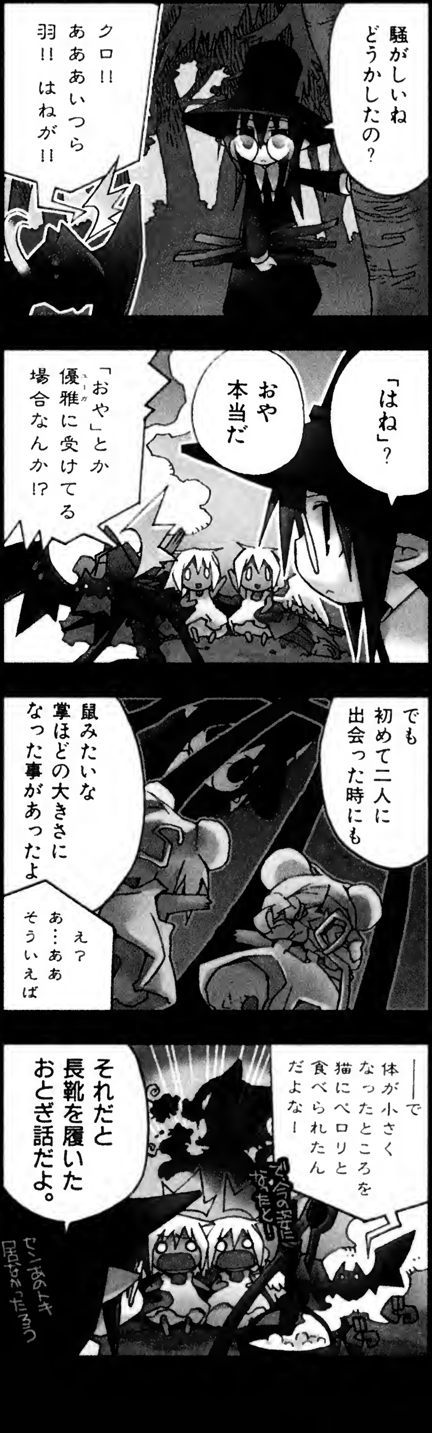
KURO often gets mistaken for a boy throughout her journey. While a large part of this is because of her appearance, it also has a lot to do with the way she talks in Japanese. Kuro always refers to herself with masculine pronouns and her speech is often more boyish than ladylike, just like Kuro herself!

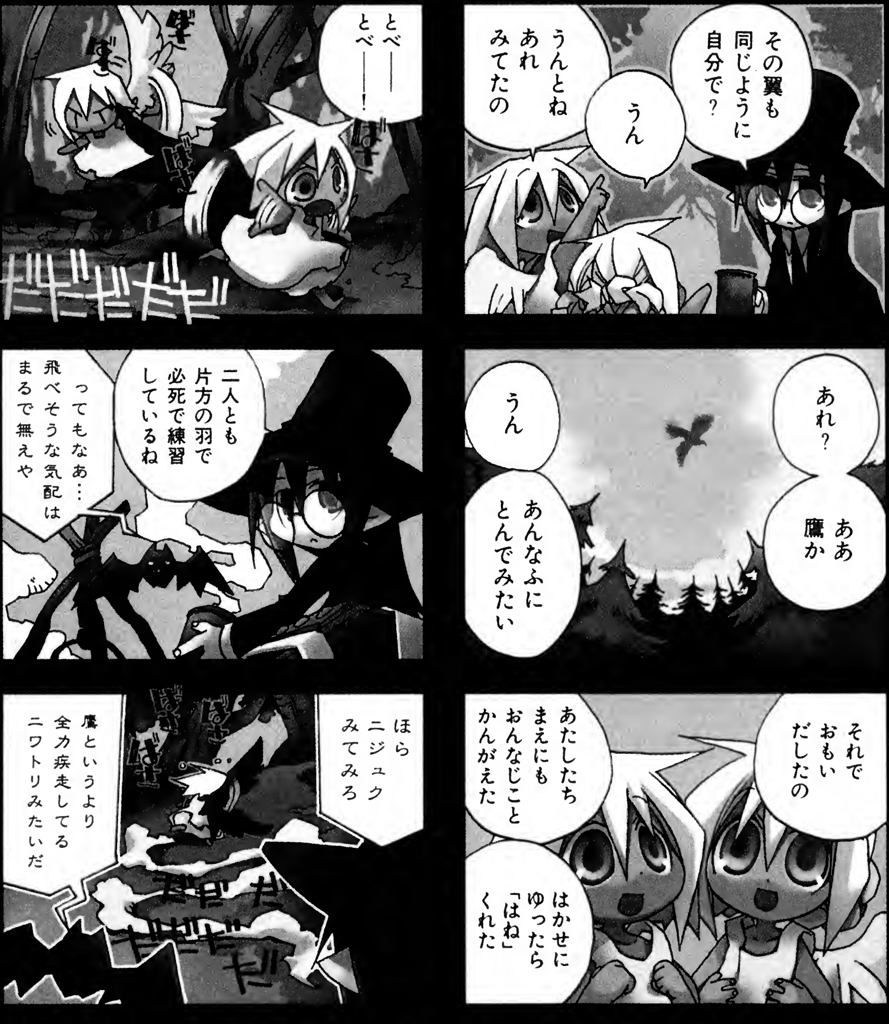
NIJUKU and SANJU, Kuro's adorable companions, also have their own unique way of speaking. Their dialogue is written entirely in *kana*, which is made up of the two most basic writing systems of the Japanese language. This visual aid goes even further in stressing the pair's innocence and naïveté. They also speak in broken phrases, which we've tried to retain in this edition. Since one of the twins childishly refers to Kuro as "Kuro-cha," they're pretty easy to tell apart. Do you know which is which?


どこまで続いて
どこで終わるかも
わからない道を
ひたすらに
ひたすらに
あるく。
「旅」をすることで
哲学や浪漫 人生の詩を
見出す人も居るけれど
わたしの場合は
こんなことを考えてた
気がする。
「もし
世界が
手のひらくらいの
大きさだったら
きっと旅するのだって
楽だったのに。」
ひつぎかつ
棺担ぎのクロ。
懐中旅話
～カイチュウタビバナシ～

VOLUME 2 PREVIEW


うう〜〜〜 山の朝は 寒ィ…
おはよ セン
よ——
おう—— …ん？
お前ら なんかいつもと ちがってないか？
ちがう？
あ そうか いつもの獣 みたいな耳が ないか…
ら
耳とか
それどころ じゃねえ—— ⁉
？


騒がしいね どうかしたの？
クロ!! あああいつら 羽!! はねが!!
「はね」？
おや 本当だ
「おや」とか 優雅（ユーガ）に受けてる 場合なんか⁉
でも 初めて二人に 出会った時にも 鼠みたいな 掌ほどの大きさに なった事があったよ
え？ あ…ああ そういえば
——で 体が小さく なったところを 猫にペロリと 食べられたんだよな！
それだと 長靴を履いた おとぎ話だよ。
で、今の話に なったと！
セン あのトキ 居なかったろう


その翼も同じように自分で？
うん
うんとねあれみてたの
とべーーー とべーーーー！
ばさ ばさ
だだだだだ
あれ？
ああ鷹か
うん
あんなふにとんでみたい
二人とも片方の羽で必死で練習しているね
ってもなあ…飛べそうな気配はまるで無えや
それでおもいだしたの
あたしたちまえにもおんなじことかんがえた
はかせにゆったら「はね」くれた
ほらニジュクみてみろ
鷹というより全力疾走してるニワトリみたいだ
でもなんかかたっぽずつしかなかった
それじゃ何の役にもたたねえぞ
さらにサンジュ……
こっちはもう鳥は鳥でも風見鶏だな
くるっ
くるっ

Kuro's journey continues in SHOULDER-A-COFFIN KURO, Vol. 2!